REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
777 GARNER RD E
ANCASTER ON L9K 1J4
Dec08

PM# 40009999 R9375

CHRISTIAN COURIER

October 13, 2008

No. 2850 $2.00

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARY
CHRISTIAN COURIER
PER/BX/9401/.C36
OCT 27 2008

A happy Calvinist ...p.4

The art of composting ...p. 10

63rd year of publication

Poor business ethics looms large in U.S. downturn

David R. Francis

(Christian Science Monitor) – It used to be that post-World War II recessions in the United States were the bad part of plain vanilla business cycles – inventories had piled up too high as a result of too few sales, or the Federal Reserve raised interest rates and slowed the supply of new money into the economy to battle inflation.

But the mild 2001 recession and the current slump are a bit different. Their cause, at least partly, has been dishonesty, greed, and weak business ethics. The accounting scandals at Enron, Global Crossing, WorldCom, etc., combined with the bursting of the dotcom stock bubble, pushed the economy down in 2001. Today's sinking economy, to some degree, is the result of sagging real estate values and the bad behaviour of many in the mortgage industry and on Wall Street. Losses from today's financial crisis have already reached $500 billion.

Mass failure

In mature, highly developed countries like the US, individual acts of malfeasance are unlikely to have a widespread effect on the economy, notes Frank Vogl, cofounder of Transparency International, a nonprofit group which ranks nations each year by their degree of corruption, as perceived by investors.

But, he adds, when "so many people engaged in so many aspects of finance have lost their ethical compass and put their short-term personal gains above other considerations," such as was the case in the subprime mortgage market in the US, it can have a "profound macroeconomic impact." In other words, the broad economy gets hurt by greed and selfishness as ensuing financial losses mount and trust fades.

Careless behaviour

It is difficult, of course, to disentangle quantitatively how much of today's financial mess has resulted from shady practices and how much from simple mistakes, bad decisions, and false perceptions that home prices would rise indefinitely.

Brokers placing mortgages with new homeowners unlikely to afford payments on adjustable-rate loans could perhaps tell themselves that rising real estate values would enable new owners to refinance their homes later and keep them. Is that bad judgment or unethical behavior by brokers, with some home buyers going along?

Certainly it's unethical if dubious information about an applicant's finances is included in the documentation.

"Individuals get carried away," says David DeRosa, a finance professor at the Yale School of Management in New Haven, Conn. As he sees it, the housing problem lies more in reckless unwise decisions on home financing. In the case of financial derivatives that have got major banking firms in trouble (such as Lehman Brothers Holdings), part of the difficulty arose from poor risk assessment, using new financial models, he says.

Early signs

In 1993, religious institutional investors began making "eerily prophetic warnings" of an impending subprime mortgage debacle in the US, says Laura Berry, executive director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. The ICCR represents nearly 300 faith-based institutional investors managing more than $100 billion in assets.

These firms long ago voiced

See **Ethics** *on page 3*

Food safety: there is a difference between Listeria and Melamine

Nathan Stevens

(The CFFO Commentary) – The tragedies of the Listeria outbreak in Canada and the presence of melamine content in Chinese milk products pulls at the heartstrings of Canadians. It is a shame whenever human life is lost through these sorts of events. While both events are tragic, there is a key difference. The Maple Leaf incident involved an unanticipated production error while the Chinese incident seems to have been one of deliberate greed.

In Canada, the Listeria outbreak resulted in the deaths of 19 people. This is an incredible tragedy, but there was no intent to harm Canadians. Maple Leaf has taken full responsibility for the incident, and has been adamant in stressing how its business model is committed to producing safe food for Canadians. Its large-scale processing operation represents greater efficiencies and the ability to viably fill national markets. However, it possesses the very real danger that if things go wrong, they go very wrong indeed, affecting the entire market.

A case of greed

The Chinese melamine tainting is reported to have sickened 53,000 children, including the hospitalization of 13,000 young people and the death of four. While still under investigation, news reports portray a case of greed corrupting the industry and it appears that Chinese farmers may have been directly involved. Essentially, many producers and companies chose to water down their milk products and then add melamine to provide misleading protein content. What remains to be seen is if the farmers really understood what they were doing or if someone else had taken advantage of them.

From where I sit, this certainly raises questions about the practices surrounding fresh and packaged food that Canadians are receiving from regions in the world with weaker food regulations or respect for human safety. That we cannot necessarily know this from the label on the package at our local store is even more disturbing. The quest for cheaper goods and freer trade cannot come at the cost of the health of Canadians. The CFFO investigated this issue in our last seminar series and our members felt that consumers deserve the right to know where their food comes from.

The Canadian food safety system is one of the strongest in the world with relatively few serious incidents. Unfortunately, terrible tragedies can occur in food systems, whether through unanticipated production errors or human greed. However, it is vitally important to make a distinction between the two very different root causes of these tragedies.

Nathan Stevens is the Research and Policy Advisor for the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. The CFFO Commentary is heard weekly on CFCO Chatham, CKNX Wingham, Ontario, and is archived on the CFFO website: www.christianfarmers.org/index.html.

The Human Rights Commission's debacle

Freedom of speech is an American concept, so I don't give it any value.
(Dean Steacy, CHRC investigator, May 10, 2007)

Human rights have become a weapon. A potent force for denunciation and defeat – not in the hands of the abused, but in the hands of the abusers. Those powerful few who know little – and want even less – of freedom or equality.
(Anne Bayefsky, "Lethal Politics: Antisemitism as Human Rights." July 6, 2008)

Harry Antonides

Canadian Human Rights Commissions have been much in the news lately. And for good reasons. As long as their victims are obscure teachers, pastors or small businessmen with little financial clout, their misfortune receives little public attention. But when the human rights enforcers take on a highly public organization such as *Maclean's* magazine, or a popular and prolific columnist such as Mark Steyn, sparks start to fly and many more begin to pay attention.

Muslims protest

Maclean's was hauled before no fewer than three Human Rights Commissions (Alberta, B.C. and Canada), charged with violating the human rights of Muslims. This complaint resulted from the magazine's decision to publish Steyn's article, "The Future Belongs to Islam," an excerpt from his book *America Alone*. The B.C. Human Rights Commission conducted a hearing in early June where the chief complainant (Canadian Islamic Council president, Mohamed Elmasry) did not even bother to show up.

The magazine insisted that it had merely exercised its constitutional freedom of the press. But it did not use this occasion to mount a vigorous defence by exposing the travesty of using human rights enforcement to destroy one of the basic freedoms enshrined in Canadian law. (Perhaps it expected that the farcical nature of the hearing itself would prove that these charges were totally groundless.)

Mark Steyn has not allowed himself to be intimidated and silenced. In fact, he managed to get at the heart of the issue at stake in this dispute when he summarized his position:

Just for the record, my book is not about Islam, not really. Rather, it posits Islam as an opportunist beneficiary of Western self-enfeeblement. The most important quotation in the entire text is…a bald statement by the late historian Arnold Toynbee: 'Civilizations die from suicide, not murder.' (Maclean's, January 14,2008)

Spirited defence

The pace of publicity picked up when the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission (AHRCC) decided to prosecute Ezra Levant, a Calgary-based lawyer. While serving as the publisher of the now defunct *Western Standard*, Levant reproduced the Danish cartoons in February 2006.

The Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities, and Syed Soharwardy, a Calgary imam, launched a human rights complaint against Levant. Rather than meekly accepting the findings of the AHRCC, Levant fought back with gusto. (Soharwardy later abandoned his complaint, explaining that he had changed his mind – though he offered no reimbursement for Levant's extensive costs.)

Here was a publicity-savvy, articulate and fearless defender of his freedom as a Canadian citizen. And when Levant finally had his turn before a Human Rights officer, he proceeded not only to defend his rights as a free citizen, but he argued that there is no basis in law for the very existence of these misnamed state agencies. He followed this up by using the Internet to broadcast his reasoned opposition to this abuse of governmental powers. (www.ezralevant.com)

A strange place indeed

Almost two years after Soharwardy had lodged his complaint, Levant appeared before a human rights officer who conducted a 90-minute interrogation. He wrote about his impressions of that encounter under the heading: "What a Strange Place Canada is." (*Globe and Mail*, January 21, 2008). After asking Levant what his intention and purpose of the offending article was, he reported:

Officer McGovern said it as calmly as if I had asked her what time it was…. It was so banal, so routine. When she walked in, she seemed happy. With a smile, she reached out her hand to shake mine. I refused – to me, nothing could have been more incongruous. Would I warmly greet a police officer who arrested me as a suspect in a crime? Then why should I do so for a thought crime? This was not normal; I would not normalize it with the pleasantries of polite society.

This was not a high-school debating tournament where Human Rights Officer McGovern and I were equals, enjoying a shared interest in politics and publishing…. I told her that the complaint process itself was a punishment. Even if I was eventually acquitted, I would still lose – hundreds of hours, and tens of thousands of dollars in legal bills. That's not an accident, that's one of the tools of these commissions. Every journalist in the country has been taught a lesson: Censor yourself now, or be put through a costly wringer….

One of the complainants against me is someone I would describe as a radical Muslim imam, Syed Soharwardy. He grew up in the madrasses of Pakistan and he lectures on the Saudi circuit. He advocates sharia law for all countries, including Canada. His website is rife with Islamic supremacism – offensive to many Canadian Jews, gentiles, women and gays. But his sensitivities –his Saudi-Pakistani values – have been offended by me.

And so now the secular government of Alberta is enforcing his fatwa against the cartoons.

Levant concluded his opening remarks with this ringing declaration: "But it is not I who am on trial: it is the freedom of all Canadians."

"A hollow victory"

On August 1 the AHRCC issued a "confidential report … not for distribution except to the parties of the complaint," etc., in which it announced that it has dismissed the complaint against Ezra Levant.

It is hard to believe that a government agency deciding issues of significance for every Canadian citizen would attempt to keep its decisions out of the public domain. Such secrecy cannot be legal. It ends up looking foolish and sinister, removing any doubt about its true, menacing presence on the Canadian political landscape.

In any case, Levant blithely ignored this instruction. And promptly wrote a blistering commentary, published in the *National Post*, entitled "A Hollow Victory." He confirmed that he had been acquitted of illegal discrimination in a case that had cost the taxpayers more than $500,000, involving 15 bureaucrats at the Alberta Human Rights Commission, while the cost to him and the former magazine is $100,000.

He felt no joy or gratitude for this exoneration, though he is happy to be done with this malicious prosecution. But he resents having been forced through this costly and lengthy ordeal. Besides, the decision, based on the advice of the Human Rights director Pardeep S. Gundara, can still be appealed to the AHRCC's Chief Commissioner. Presumably that would also be at no charge to the appellants.

If this had been brought in a civil court, the judge would order the losing parties to pay his legal bills, but now they did not have to pay him any of his costs. Levant writes that the secular Alberta government allowed one of its agencies to be hijacked by Islamists whose feelings have been hurt.

Levant then analyzes the gist of what he terms Gundara's "breathtakingly arrogant document." The latter writes that the cartoons are "stereotypical, negative and offensive," but the offensiveness is "muted by the context of the accompanying article." Furthermore, *Western Standard* had published letters for and against in a subsequent issue. The Human Rights director also decided in favour of acquittal because "the cartoons were not simply stuck in the middle of the magazine with no purpose or related story."

Rather than gratefully accepting this acquittal and quietly walking away, as many might have done, Levant explains:

Let me translate: You'd better be "reasonable" in how you use your freedoms, or you won't be allowed to keep them. You'd better not run political cartoons "simply stuck in the middle" of a magazine. You'd better have a "purpose" for being "negative" that is approved by a bureaucrat, when he finally gets around to it three years later.

This is Canada

Levant writes that he has no interest in Gundara's views about the cartoons. He is not interested in his opinions about what editors can or cannot publish because this is Canada and not Saudi Arabia. He sums up:

My dismissal is not a victory for freedom of the press: Alberta's press is not free – it is now subject to the approval of the government. But Canadians have the right to a free press in spite of the government. We have the right to break every one of Gundara's petty and subjective rules.

Levant then asks why the AHRCC did not acquit the Rev. Stephen Boissoin, a Red Deer minister, for writing a controversial letter about homosexuality in the local paper. This letter met all the conditions prescribed by Gundara. The difference is that Levant is a "political pain in the neck for the HRC," whereas Rev. Boissoin was quiet and so he becomes "roadkill. But neither of us are free – we both have to have our views checked out by the government."

Levant concludes with information that cannot be described other than shocking. He writes that two years ago the HRC told him that if he paid a few thousand dollars and gave them a page in his magazine, he would go scot-free. He writes:

Most victims of the HRCs accept deals like that, and it's certainly cheaper than a 900-day fight. But getting the approval of the HRC's censor is morally no better than their shakedown attempt. Whether I have to pay off a radical imam or appease a meddling bureaucrat, it's still an infringement on our Canadian liberties.

It takes extraordinary courage and a large dose of stubbornness to stand up to the bullies of the so-called human rights commissions. Not surprisingly, Levant has made a lot of enemies in certain circles. Many have accused him of being arrogant, a self-promoter and publicity seeker. The trouble with Canada is that it suffers from a shortage of people like Ezra Levant, who can read the signs of the time and refuse to sell their souls for a mess of pottage.

Harry Antonides (hantonides@sympatico.ca) is a former director of the Work Research Foundation. He lives in Willowdale, Ontario.

News

Bending the rules

Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

Canadians are off to the polls this week not quite three years after our last election. Historically speaking, this premature poll is not unusual for a minority government, which is tempted to break out of the constraints of a divided parliament to try for a "normal" majority government. However, the fact that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has done so now was somewhat unexpected, given that one of his vaunted reforms was to establish fixed election dates.

According to the Fixed Election Dates Act of 2006, we are supposed to go to the polls on the third Monday in October in the fourth year after the previous election. It specifies that the next election was to have occurred on 19 October 2009.

Why fixed election dates? Because previous practice had allowed a government to time an election to its own political advantage. According to the *Constitution Act, 1982*, a government is required to submit itself to the voters' verdict in at most five years after the last election, but the exact timing within this period is left up to the prime minister and cabinet, who could request a dissolution of parliament when they believed it would suit their own purposes. The point of fixing the date was to remove this power from the prime minister and to eliminate what amounts to a conflict of interest between the party's good and the public good.

So why did Harper go back on his intentions? Harper has a minority government, which makes it more difficult for him to enact his own agenda. Prime ministers much prefer majority governments because they can more easily get their own way. Moreover, the opposition Liberals are in disarray, and their leader, Stéphane Dion, had declined every Conservative provocation to defeat the government. With a possible recession growing out of the current turmoil in the world's markets, Harper naturally feared having to face the electorate in a year's time when the country's economic indicators could be down and his party made to bear the blame.

Obviously Harper broke no law, as the Act explicitly leaves intact the authority of the governor general to dissolve parliament at her discretion. But because the governor general almost never acts except on the advice of her prime minister, this means that the latter once again has effective power to time an election to his own liking. Harper's action certainly goes against the *spirit* of that law, which nevertheless seems to do nothing substantive to prevent a government calling an election whenever it pleases. Thus it is difficult to see Harper's request for dissolution as anything other than a cynical move to subvert his own constitutional reform.

Shortly before the election call, Andrew Coyne published in *Macleans* a hypothetical scenario in which the governor general, Michaëlle Jean, requires Harper to provide her with evidence that Parliament has ceased to function productively. As he is unable to do so, she threatens to ask Dion to form a government and Harper backs down. Unfortunately our governors general have evolved into paper tigers unwilling to uphold constitutional principle against a sitting government. Harper's request was, of course, granted and the election was indeed called.

Given that our governors general are not likely to recover their ostensibly crucial role as guardians of the constitution any time soon, other means will have to be found to check the prime minister's power and to prevent him bending the rules for partisan purposes.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and hopes we won't be voting again in another two years.

Outsmarted after all

We received the following story from someone who claimed it represented a true event that took place in Charlotte, North Carolina. Whether or not it is a true event, we think the story deserves to be reprinted, if only because of the fascinating and satisfying outcome. Teachers and preachers might use it as an example of hubris and poetic justice.

A lawyer purchased a box of very rare and expensive cigars and then insured them against, among other things, fire. Within a month, having smoked his entire stockpile of these great cigars and without yet having made even his first premium payment on the policy, the lawyer filed a claim against the insurance company. In his claim, the lawyer stated the cigars were lost "in a series of small fires." The insurance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason that the man had consumed the cigars in the normal fashion.

The lawyer sued and WON!

Delivering the ruling, the judge agreed with the insurance company that the claim was frivolous. The judge stated, nevertheless, that the lawyer held a policy from the company, by which it had warranted that the cigars were insurable. The company had also guaranteed that it would insure the cigars against fire, without defining what it considered to be unacceptable "fire." Hence, the company was obligated to pay the claim. Rather than endure a lengthy and costly appeal process, the insurance company accepted the ruling and paid $15,000 to the lawyer for his loss of the cigars lost in the "fires."

After the lawyer cashed the check, the insurance company had him arrested on 24 counts of ARSON!!!

With his own insurance claim and testimony from the previous case being used against him, the lawyer was convicted of intentionally burning his insured property and was sentenced to 24 months in jail and a $24,000 fine.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE NEXT TIME THE MARKETS CORRECT?

How will your portfolio stand up in the next bear market?

Are you looking for a reasonable rate of return without sticking your neck out?

Do you have/want **PEACE OF MIND** over your finances?

For a no obligation, free assessment of your portfolio,

Call me now,
24 hours at 1-800-541-0977 local 209
(downtown office)

CLARENCE WEIMA CFP
Executive Financial Consultant

1-800-488-9817 (home)
clarence.weima@investorsgroup.com

The Plan by Investors Group

Investors Group Financial Services Inc.

Ethics *continued from page 1*

concerns in regard to predatory lending practices, inappropriate underwriting standards, and the potential consequences of securitization of debt instruments, that is, the packaging of bundles of mortgages and other loans into a big single investment for sale to pension funds and other investors around the world. If the early warnings had been heeded, the world "would have avoided the kind of meltdown we are experiencing today," she says.

Old rules better

Ms. Berry argues that ethical investing practices, such as those strived for by ICCR members, are less likely to lead to catastrophic losses. She notes that investment funds compliant with Muslim sharia rules, including strict prohibition of investments tied to collection of interest, have performed extremely well in the current down market. Berry holds that the "old rules," the rules of ethics set out ages ago by Christian, Muslim, and other leaders, are still in place.

ICCR members often strive to encourage corporate executives to follow good governance rules, using their investment money as leverage. Corporations were created in the first place hundreds of years ago "for the public good," Berry says, not merely to benefit managers or shareholders alone. This goal gives them "their license to operate," she says.

But the former Citigroup money manager cautions that the globalization of finance and the ability to move money and financial information with great speed through modern communications has multiplied the dangers from poor and unethical investment decisions.

"We have moved from arithmetic to calculus," she says.

TORONTO 2008 AMSTERDAM

Via Martinair

The 2008 Martinair charter flights are now available.
Prices are fantastically low.

Book Now and Save!

VERSTRAETE TRAVEL & CRUISES

2 office locations to serve you:

36 Secord Drive
St.Catharines ON
Tel 905-934-4414
or 1-800-405-6088

14845 Yonge St.
Aurora ON
Tel 416-969-8100
or: 1-800-565-9267

visit us at: www.verstraetetravel.com

Editorial

Harry der Nederlanden: A happy Calvinist

Bert Witvoet

(Bert delivered this message at the funeral of Harry der Nederlanden on Wednesday, October 1, 2008. We publish it here for the benefit of those who could not attend Harry's funeral.)

During the last two weeks of Harry's life, one line kept circling around in my head, over and over: "Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day." The thought saddened me. Harry's little day was coming to an end swiftly.

Moses, the man of God, wrote in his prayer we know as Psalm 90: "You sweep people away in the sleep of death – they are like the new grass of the morning: in the morning it springs up new, but by evening it is dry and withered." Life's little day.

The Apostle James writes in his letter to the Jews in the Diaspora: "What is your life? You are a vapour that appears for a little while and then vanishes."

The Venerable Bede, a Benedictine monk who lived in the seventh century, had an even more striking metaphor in mind when he compared human life to a sparrow that flies from the dark cold night through an open window into a warm and brightly lit banquet hall and out again through an opposite window.

So according to our spiritual leaders from Moses, to James, to the venerable Bede, human life is very short. "Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day."

Another characteristic of human life is that it cannot be repeated. Cal Seerveld writes in an article in the *Christian Courier* of September 22: "Our life time on this old earth is precious because it is "once-only" in character." He's right. You can't do life on earth over. You don't get a second kick at the can. This is it.

So when you put the two together, life is short and it's "once-only" in character, then it forces you to ask the question, "What is the meaning of this life?" "How can I make the most of it?" Every hour, every minute becomes precious. It leads us to conclude that time has to be redeemed.

A happy Calvinist

Maybe all these considerations make you a little melancholic. Now the last thing Harry would want us to do is become melancholic. Harry was what Peter Schuurman referred to in an editorial in the *Christian Courier* a happy Calvinist." To some people that may sound like an oxymoron. How can a Calvinist be happy? But the stereotype of a dour Calvinist comes from a branch of Calvinism that is rather joyless, guilt-ridden and legalistic. Legalistic Calvinists take themselves too serious. But a happy Calvinist, like Harry, is the true Calvinist. Why? Let me explain.

We all know that Calvinism stresses the sovereignty of a loving God. Years ago I interviewed Dr. Peter Steen, a professor of philosophy from the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The subject was "humour." According to Peter Steen we can laugh about everything that is human. And by laughing about human life, he said, we surrender it to God. We are saying to God, "Here, God, you take care of it. You are the loving, sovereign God, and only you can solve my problems." That's a very Calvinistic way of looking at life, isn't it? God is sovereign, and we are not. So I don't need to take myself too serious, and someone like Harry can even laugh about a visit to the hospital. This is what he wrote to Curt Gesh a year and a half ago:

"Did you [too] end up sitting and waiting in an open-backed gown for an hour-and-a-half? Doctors seem to have a penchant for piling up patients so they have a lot of them in reserve. I wonder why? Do they expect a few of them to die in the waiting room or to run out in fear?"

But laughter was never a form of escape for Harry. He did not flinch when death stared him in the face. He did not resort to humour as a form of denial. Humour in our society is often used to deflect the real issues of life. Humour can prevent us from becoming vulnerable. For Harry humour was a declaration of freedom. I'm not in charge; God is. Let us laugh. And laugh Harry did, often. And he often laughed the loudest and the longest when he told us a funny story.

Harry the janitor

What struck me funny about Harry was that, although he was a brilliant scholar, for some eight years he was a janitor at Calvin Memorial Christian School, now known as Beacon Christian School. He did other things, too, of course while he was janitor. He translated books from the Dutch for Padeai Press, for example. Nevertheless, it struck me that he must have been the smartest janitor in all of Canada. I don't mean to belittle the intelligence of the staff at Beacon, but when Harry left Beacon, the average IQ at the school went down several notches.

This is another funny comment Harry wrote to Curt Gesh:

I went to one of those discover your gifts workshop. Turned out I was pretty good with a mop. In today's world everything is a charisma."

But being a true Calvinist meant for Harry that he saw no problem in being a janitor. With George Herbert, an Anglican priest from the 17th century, he could say:

Teach me my God and King/ in all things thee to see./ And what I do of anything,/ to do it as for thee.

A servant with this clause/ Makes drudgery divine: /Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,/ Makes that and the action fine.

Both the classroom and the action of cleaning the classroom end up looking fine in God's kingdom. That's pure Reformational talk, isn't it? Sweeping a classroom to honour God in the doing of it is full-time kingdom work. It allows you to sweep Satan into the dustbin of history. Of course, sweeping a classroom all by yourself at 10 o'clock in the evening, also allows you a wonderfully quiet place to read a philosophy book during a break.

That Harry would do things differently was already obvious earlier in life. One time, when he entered an exam room at university, he sat down and read the questions on the exam. He didn't like any of them. So he decided to write his own question and answer it. He got full marks for his effort. At another time, he wrote a lengthy paper for his philosophy professor. After he wrote it, he decided he did not agree with his own position, so he wrote a second paper, in which he opposed his previous paper. He handed them in both with the predictable outcome: a straight "A."

Harry the editor

Harry really found his niche when he became the editor of the *Christan Courier*. Now his knowledge and insight could find full expression in his editorials and in his news digest commentaries. And don't think for a moment that his custodial years were not an excellent training ground for this time of blossoming. The purpose of wielding a broom is not far removed from the purpose of wielding a keyboard and sweeping the cobwebs out of people's minds. Both actions are responses to the cultural mandate: to be good stewards of this creation.

This what Harry wrote to Curt in February of this year:

I must be getting addled. Not long ago I put one and the same article in two consecutive issues. I didn't get any complaints, however, so most of our readers must be getting short memories, too.

Harry, with all his intelligence, understood the limits of human understanding better than most people. That's because he was wise. He reveled in the knowledge that God's ways are higher than our ways, and that we cannot call God to account. He never questioned the fact that he was stricken with cancer, and that, in the end, this disease would take his life long before he was tired of living. He didn't ask much of life. Material possessions and wealth did not have a spell on him. Books were far more important to him because they allowed him to travel the world of ideas. Family and friends were important, as was the community of believers, whether that was his church community or his readership.

A pastoral approach

Toward the end of his life Harry pleaded for a pastoral approach to the readers of *CC* when he met with the board. Strangely enough that pastoral approach consisted of not insulting their intelligence. If market-driven voices pleaded for short snippets of information and bullet-like-data to break things down for the readers, he believed that one could not understand the depth of God's wisdom that way. He did not mind a page-long column or a two-pager by people like Harry Antonides and Marian Van Til. Who is this that darkens my council with cries for quick opinions and bite-size slogans? With Alexander Pope he would say,

A little learning is a dangerous thing
Drink deep or taste not the Pyrean spring

But his pastoral approach also showed itself in respecting the writings of his contributors. Harry did not superimpose his requirements for style on other people's writings. He did not mind a certain kind of roughness to the contents and looks of *CC*. He did not sweat the commas and semicolons. Life is not that neat, and he did not want to quash the vitality of his writers.

But above all, he cared about he spiritual and mental welfare of his readers. Without being judgmental, he looked askance at the contemporary trend of consumerism whether that be church membership or political demands from governments, and he rejected the excessive

Continued on next page

Christian Courier

Founded in 1945

An independent biweekly that seeks to: report on significant events in the Christian community and the world; express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective; provide contact for the Christian community.

EDITORIAL TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF

Editor: Harry der Nederlanden editor@christiancourier.ca
Circulation: Rose der Nederlanden rose@christiancourier.ca
Accounts/Advertising Manager: Ineke Medcalf-Strayer ads@christiancourier.ca

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by *Christian Courier* or the publisher. Please contact circulation if you cannot afford the subscription price but want to receive *Christian Courier*.

Christian Courier
5 Joanna Dr, St. Catharines ON L2N1V1
Tel: (905) 682-8311; 1-800-969-4838
Web site: www.christiancourier.ca

Publications Mail Registration No. 09375

We acknowledge the assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Canada

emphasis on individualism and human rights, as well as the narrow views of salvation that reduced the big picture of God's coming kingdom.

Love for the Kingdom

It's no accident that Harry was enamoured with the Dutch theologian A.A. Van Ruler. Harry faithfully translated this man's work, and would have liked to have finished the task. But he asked Bram Hoff to take over from him so that readers of *CC* might still hear the voice that Harry loved after he had passed away.

In a recent translation Van Ruler talks about Christ's Kingdom coming to an end. The text that van Ruler focused on was 1 Corinthians 15:24-26. We read: "Then the end will come, when he [Christ] hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

Harry loved that message. The great goal of life is the kingdom of God and creation wholly redeemed. It's a big picture story that easily gets lost in the self-centered focus of much of today's Christianity. Rather than focus unduly on our feelings and our personal moral improvement, Harry would rather go with the inspiring narrative of what God is doing in the whole creation, in the conflict of nations, in the defeat of false ideologies, in the change of the seasons, in the faithfulness of families that structure family time, in the discovery of new and wholesome technologies, in the willingness of parents to pay for Christian education, in the unfolding of God's world, and, yes, in personal piety.

Harry's faith

Harry's faith was a robust faith. He longed for the complete rule of God over his creation. He saw the beauty of God's world in his walks through Short Hills. He also saw the ugliness of what we sinful human beings are doing to this creation. But he rested in the assurance that Christ's resurrection will unfold all the life-giving possibilities in this world. He believed that death would not have the last word. "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

Harry was courageous and honest to the end. He himself talked about fear and fearlessness in his editorial "From Wooden Shoes to Cowboy Boots."

This is what he wrote: As death draws nearer to me, I tell myself that I really do not fear death as such, but I'd be a liar if I said I didn't fear the pain and suffering that may come before. A painful, lingering end is one of the nightmares that haunt us in our technological culture…. Faith does not lift those fears from our shoulders. It does not turn us into cowboys who can face all threats with equanimity. Faith does, however, I believe, put all those fears on a different level. I may trust that the Lord will give me the wherewithal so that fear does not totally overwhelm me and define me. He will give me the courage to stand up to the devil even in the darkest hours knowing that fear will not lead me to despair because God has infused his Spirit of comfort and hope into my backbone."

God answered that confession … in spades.

Christian Courier

Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association

Canada Mail:
PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40009999
REGISTRATION NO. 9375
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
CHRISTIAN COURIER
5 JOANNA DR
ST. CATHARINES ON L2N 1V1
email: **subscriptions@christiancourier.ca**

U.S. Mail:
Christian Courier
(USPS 518-090)
Second-class postage paid at Lewiston NY
Postmaster: send address changes to: Christian Courier, Box 110 Lewiston NY 14092

Subscriptions:	**Canada (G.S.T. incl.)**	**USA**
one yr. (24 issues)	$44.00	$44.00 US
two yrs. (48 issues)	$85.00	$85.00 US

Advertising deadlines: display and classified advertising: Wednesday, 9 a.m. (12 days before publication date) See classified pages or web site **www.christiancourier** for more details.
(ISSN 1192-3415) Published second and fourth Mondays of the month.

Address all correspondence to: 5 Joanna Dr, St. Catharines ON L2N 1V1
Tel: 905-682-8311 or 1-800-969-4838
e-mail: Advertising: ads@christiancourier.ca
Subscriptions: subscriptions@christiancourier.ca

PRINTED IN CANADA

Prologue

This prologue comes too soon
I am unprepared
Death's indignity has swept
My father, the author, his clay
But his blood and words remain –
Words against the darkness
To guide his children's gaze

Through Isaac's eyes we see the scythe
Dwindle 'neath the foundling's eye
I am my father's son, O Death,
You shall writhe –
Wane in his words

Jonathan der Nederlanden (2008)
said at his father's funeral before reading "Death defying act"

Death defying act

Even when expected, death's coming
is rude, abrupt, a sudden fissure
opening in the earth. Although he shows
his invitation, you slam the door on him
and brace it with your back.

No matter what his disguise –
healer, comforter, journey's end,
dispenser of justice – death is
a burglar who breaks down doors
to rob, to snatch and smash.

He barged in twenty-something years ago
to play his little tricks, devil
that he is, resolving to take Mom,
piercing her guts with cancer.
And, Dad, you trembled to be left alone,
but now he took you first.

Big joke! Big victory, Death!
But the joke's on you: your dallying
gave us a miracle, years that
wove Mom and Dad more tightly
together. Getting dressed, getting up
out of a chair – every movement a dance,
a dance against death. You thought
to drag your heels to draw out
your torment, but your wound
only roused the body to resist,
knitting new connections.

You took a shredder to his brain
scrambling past and present,
destroying his familiar world
so he was a stranger in his own
home, among his own family.
Homeless, he became restless,
ever seeking for a world
restored, a world cleansed
of your lies and confusions.
Thinking to send him astray,
you turned his face toward home.

You came as in a morality play:
the villain who strips away
one support after another to isolate
and weaken your victim,
but in every hand that reached
to help was the power of many
hands and in the voice of one
many voices spoke reassurance.

Words common as daisies that
were passed from mouth to mouth
till they were faded as a second hand
shirt suddenly revived, took colour
as they brought light into Dad's eyes.
Death brought life into dead
platitudes, fragrance into sterility.

Granted, Death, you took more
from him than you took from Job,
took his self-knowledge and words
that would have given strength
to withstand you, took and took,
whittling away flesh and memory
till he was little more than bone,
but still his eyes lit up like distant
stars to prayer and psalms, to words
that found his deep-formed soul.

So little remains. And, Death,
that's all you get – remains;
for, look, he is not here.
Look: once again an empty tomb.

What a shadow you cast, Death,
huge as a dirigible. You've puffed
yourself up beyond all bounds, but
though you huff and puff
though you blow your worst,
you cannot blow the house down
or budge it from its base.
For all your huff and puff, Death,
you cannot blow a single note
without the trumpet-maker's brass –
not now, not at the final curtain call.
Whatever noise you make is
but an echo of the silver trumpet
blown by God's angel band.

Look and listen: at nightfall
the trumpet's brilliant call
reverberates between heaven and earth,
shattering into golden shards
the slowly sinking golden sun,
that sinks from sight only so
that we may sleep and rise again,
refreshed with eyes made new.
Oh, do, Lord, do let us see
with eyes like morning dew
that you make all things new.

Harry der Nederlanden (1998)
at his father's graveside

Family memoriam

Clarissa der Nederlanden Taylor

On behalf of my family, I want to thank you all for coming out to mourn and celebrate with us the life of our dad, husband, grandpa, brother, uncle, friend. I wrote a letter to my dad shortly before his death and my mother asked that I read it here today. Well, I'm not going to – but I will read an excerpt.

Dear Pappy,

When I was small, you were my very own personal Mr. Dressup (the highest compliment), then Murdoch from the A-team (again, the highest compliment) and when I grew older I told everyone you were the smartest guy in the world. Then I grew up. And you were still the smartest guy in the world. You were always everything I wanted and needed. You have always been the best person I have ever known. I have been so proud – I beam when I speak of you. I had no father revelation let-downs. Quite the contrary. Your goodness grew and grew. And it's not because you always had all the answers. It was because you didn't always have the answers. You showed me the tension in the greys – that there are two sides to most everything – every political stance, every church conflict. You showed me a world of imperfection. And in showing me imperfection, you juxtaposed beauty. In much the same way as "the truth lies somewhere in between", so does beauty live in the grey, in the unknown. It lives somewhere caught up in that tension-in the stillness, the not knowing. You showed me streams and brooks and trails and gnarly tree roots. You fed squirrels from your fingers and befriended crazy coots and prattle-lipped asian ladies. You adventured and observed and laughed and invited people of all flavours into your world. You love pie and only the occasional pile of blueberry pancakes, (even though they're your favourite). You see the hues of blues and orange and pinks in the big broad sky and observe the glory in everyday bits and details. You see the big cerebral, time-worn, complicated issues as well as the small, the mundane, the fleeting. You live this life of juxtaposition and because of it the beauty shines brighter. You have shown me such beauty.

All the things I could have done and never did with my life, it's not because I didn't think that I could but because the options were so endless. (I think at least a couple of us got this from you). There's so much. How can one choose?

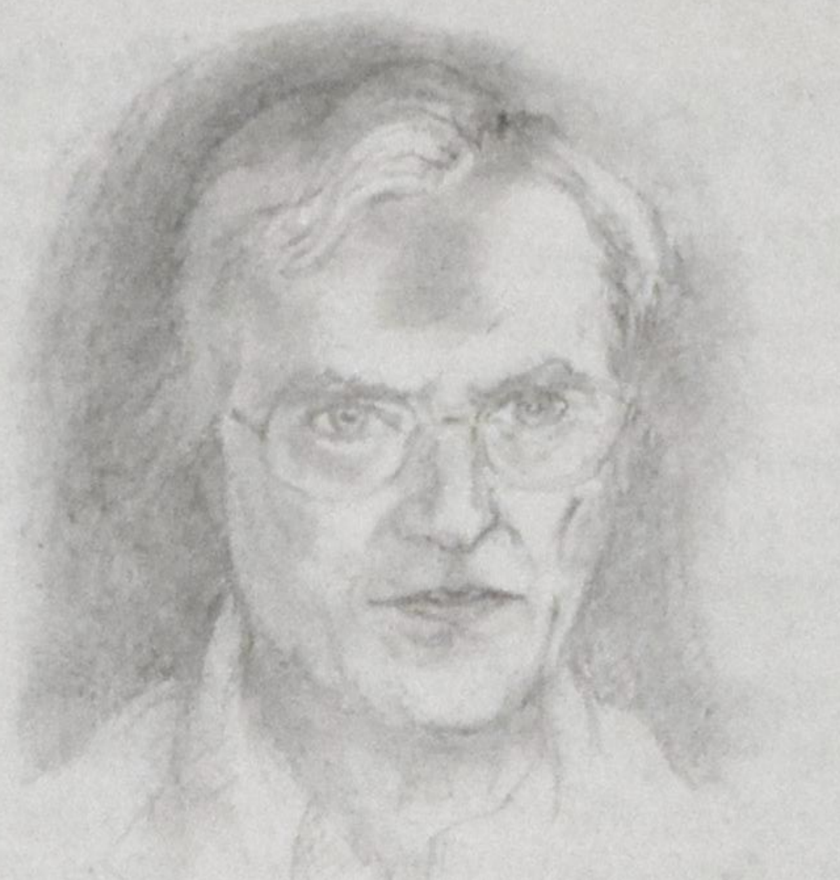
I am happy in my life. And you have shown me how to be. Not with riches or elevation, but with ideas and imaginings and nature and faith.

But I am so very very very sad to see you go – and I will miss you so much. I will always do poem-inspired present searches at Christmas and let Max eat as many timbits (in lieu of zingers) as he likes as we watch the trains go by and teach him to love words and ideas and be a mischief-maker (like you) and I will draw pictures and go for hikes and frequent second hand bookstores and stop – and breathe in your scent and feel your love around me.

Love, Clarissa
(your bestest, most favourite child)

Our dad, poet and story-teller, would have many words of wisdom to add here. Those who know him well know he was never at a lack for words – but I find myself to be. And in us preparing the liturgy, the service without his insightful counsel, I felt it most poignantly: Our loss is so great – it is too big to condense honourably. In talking to my mom a couple days ago I said "nothing I say will be good enough" and she sighed "that is the der Nederlanden blessing and curse – the fear of not being perfect. It doesn't have to be perfect."

Our dad was the rather profound and utterly delightful combination of intellectual, wise and goofy – a playful seeker in his quest for truth. He honoured mischief. He loved creative uprisings, even (and perhaps especially) amidst persecution. He was content to literally smell the flowers, enjoy the climb, breathe in the mountain vistas. He was not one to laud material wealth or adhere to social convention. He loved Westerns, football, "The Amazing Race", Chaucer, theology, the plays of Shakespeare and Edward Albee, Derrida, "American Idol"....



Self-portrait

Our dad could turn anything into a puppet, potentially bland explanatory notes that were required for school absences became transformed in his hands. They often involved battles with dragons or subterranean creatures. His doodles and etchings are legendary in our house and can be found in the margins of decades of books and writings – and even on the bathroom wall. He loved books – he'd buy the the same book three times over on three separate occasions as long as it was a different great deal on that same good book. Our dad queried everything. He always encouraged us to consider all angles. He was an editor but he was not known for condensing contemplations. He saw the whole, the full story. And such was the way he lived his life – in wholeness, in love, in Christ – as connected to his spiritual musings and philosophies as he was to the earth, the trails, God's creation as seen.

And it was so hard for us to see a man as bright as him slowly slip away and lose his light. It is a relief now that he is at peace and I am so thankful for my place in his life, to be a recipient of his perfect honing of unconditional love – but I am sorry for Pam and Jon who received his guidance for a decade less than me and Nate. And I am sad for his grandchildren Jake and Chelsea who will miss their hikes and my baby Max who will only know through the telling what a kick-ass grandpa he had. I grieve for my father who never got to retire and take up painting. And I grieve for my mom who will miss her wise-cracking co-adventurer, who will only have her children to mock her, her laughing "shut up" as she flicks the dish towel in his face, our mother who has so so so so so so so very many books....

In fact, this past week it was suggested in jest that perhaps he had hidden money in his books to which my brother Jon replied "Actually, he was more likely to have hidden books in his money."

A few weeks ago we stopped at the harvest barn. My dad took his book to the picnic table and sat to read while my mom and I went in – a typical Harry happening. It was a lazy breezy peaceful sunny day. When I came out, I looked over at my dad and took a snapshot of him in my mind. He was already getting quite weak and it hurt to look at him. The wind was soughing in the trees, my dad had his pen poised. He paused to consider, concentrating, his tongue furrowed in the corner of his mouth, eyes looking slightly left of the visible horizon. He was smiling (I assumed) at a thought, the winsome pleasure of a perfect day, fields spreading out before him, clouds billowing, green grass, crickets chirping, blueberry pie. I approached him from behind somewhat stealthily hoping to catch a glimpse of some of his wise musings – and saw then the cartoon etchings with which he had been defacing the picnic table. He grinned at me, mischief lining his face.

My mom recently told me that the first time my dad got sick, he asked God for five more years. Well, God gave him six – and they seemed to me to be six of his most content years. We have been so blessed to be guided by his joy, his faith, his grace, his humour, his voice, his good looks. We will so miss him, our "Fount of Knowledge", our Cowboy Adventurer, our dreamy, playful Seeker. He taught us how to see. The world needs more eyes like his – with his Rose coloured glasses.

Clarissa wrote this family memorial for Harry's funeral.

Thank you

Thank you for your prayers, cards, words, notes of appreciation, emails, gifts and comfort that we received during Harry's illness. It was good to be able to read those over to him again, along with the new ones received, especially when Harry was weak.

The night before Harry died, a group of friends and church members sang for Harry. They concluded with this song which Harry had translated in *Faith and Victory in Dachau* by Rev. Jan Overduin. The tune is Eventide – *Abide with me*.

I lift my praise to you, O God most high,
The sun's last rays fade from the evening sky;
But not your Light – your Light will never die.
You make my darkness bright, when you're nearby.

When darkness falls, and roads are hard to see,
Your sweet voice calls a welcome out to me;
And like a father, reaching lovingly,
You, Lord, will gather us eternally.

The der Nederlanden family at Christmas 2007. Harry can be seen wearing his outlaw bandana.

Ineke has made it possible for you to hear Bert's message and Mendelt's song from the funeral on our website: www.christiancourier.ca

A very special family vacation

Lisa M. Petsche

They say you can't go back and revisit the past, but that's exactly what we did last month. My family went back to the Muskoka resort where we first vacationed decades ago.

My parents had stumbled across the place after years of vacationing at housekeeping cottages. It cost more, but it was a real treat not to have to pack groceries, bedding and towels for six, along with each family member's personal items, and try to cram them all into the car. And how wonderful it was to have someone else preparing, serving and cleaning up after meals and organizing activities. It was truly a time of relaxation and fun.

Over the years, various family members have spent time there, continuing the tradition. My parents vowed that, when (not if) they won the Reader's Digest Sweepstakes, they'd take the whole family there for a vacation. This year, which marks their 50th wedding anniversary, they took fate into their own hands. Having all the family together at our favourite getaway spot would be the perfect way to celebrate, they decided. It was no easy feat to accommodate the needs and schedules of 21 family members (including 11 grandchildren ages one to 21) from as far away as Florida. But with input from everyone, Mom and Dad organized a four-day group vacation for early September, when the resort is less populated but the weather's still mild.

The grandkids eagerly counted down the days and saved up money for an enroute stop at the famous Highway 11 candy shop, as well as for souvenirs and horse racing (to be explained).Our accommodations were a mix of cottages and suites. The main lodge houses a big lounge, rustic dining room, recreation room and swimming pool.Given our timing (post-Labour Day and pre-Cavalcade of Colour), we practically had the amenities to ourselves.

Although there have been enhancements over the years, such as an outdoor patio, indoor pool and several luxury suites, overall the place hasn't changed much. The lodge remains cozy, with its Muskoka stone fireplace, eclectic furnishings, cribbage-board coffee table, well-worn piano and shelves of books. The collection of classic board games is also still there, as are the photo albums. (My sisters and I were amused to find ourselves in one of them; we were right around the ages our kids are now.)

Known for its hospitality, the resort is family owned and smaller than many others in the area. The atmosphere is intimate, casual and, best of all, low-tech. There are no TVs in the guest accommodations or the lounge, and no wireless Internet service. The environment fosters socialization and old-fashioned recreation.

For the delicious, home-cooked meals, we ate at two long tables in the dining room, varying the seating arrangements.

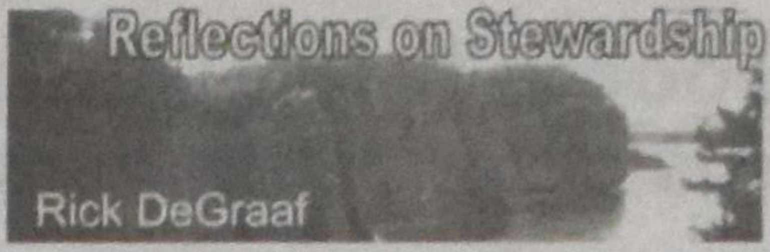
During the day we swam in the lake – containing huge, inflatable water slides and trampolines, played shuffleboard and tennis and went hiking, fishing, kayaking and pedal boating. After dark, and when it rained, we played ping pong, swam in the pool, played the piano, cards and board games in the lounge and sat around talking.

Although the seasonal recreational program – with scheduled activities every morning, afternoon and evening – had ended, the owners obligingly prepared us a campfire one evening and facilitated the legendary horse racing game another. The latter is played in the lounge with a specially marked carpet runner, six colourful wooden horses and a pair of dice, placing 25-cent bets.

In short, it was a wonderful long weekend of interaction – late into the evening for some of us – with lots of laughter and memorable moments.

At our last meal together, Mom urged us to treasure the memories, keep the love alive and pass it on. For my parents, that special vacation was the fulfilment of a decades-old dream and a time of giving thanks for 50 years of family life. It was an early Thanksgiving gift for all of us.

Lisa M. Petsche (lpetsche@idirect.ca) is a mother of three and a freelance writer specializing in spirituality and family life.



Financial tools glossary

Many of us are not familiar with a lot of the financial tools and terms that are used in estate planning and planned giving. I hope this short glossary helps explain some of these terms. To find out more about any of these tools please call one of my colleagues at CSS or your financial advisor.

Category 1 – By way of your estate

Charitable bequests: These are gifts that you designate through your Last Will and Testament. A Charitable Bequest could consist of gifts of cash (specific amounts), real estate or other property but often is a percentage of the donor's estate which is given to charity after the estate debts are taken care of. A special concept called a "Child Called Charity" can be used to provide a gift (equal to a child's share of one's estate) to be divided amongst the donor's favourite causes. If you have many causes you want to support you might consider using a Letter of Direction (see Stewardly Tip) to facilitate it.

Charitable gift annuity: A planned giving tool that enables you to support your favourite charity (or charities) with a substantial gift at death while enjoying an excellent income while living. A large portion of the income you receive is tax exempt and all donors qualify for a one-time charitable donation receipt for a portion of the donation as well. The income is based on your age and the rates in effect when the annuity is arranged. The income ends at death and the portion remaining in the annuity is given to your selected charity (or charities).

Gifts of RRSP or RRIF: Saving for your retirement is becoming an essential part of a complete financial plan. However, your strategy should also consider what happens to your RRSP or RRIF when you pass away. Upon your death, where a surviving spouse is a named beneficiary, these registered savings are transferred to his/her name without tax liability. However, where there is no surviving spouse (or disabled child) listed as the beneficiary, these accounts are deemed to be disposed of and 100 per cent of the remaining balance is added to your income in the year of death. The tax liability resulting from this disposition will be borne by your estate on your final income tax return. This is often a significant amount, and could easily be subject to tax at the highest marginal tax rate.

For many donors, an RRSP or RRIF plan will contribute significantly to income in the year of death. Since Canadians can now receive tax credits for charitable gifts up to 100 per cent of their income in the year of death (and retroactive one year) – it may make good sense to gift assets like these directly to charity through a beneficiary designation or a bequest gift in one's Will.

Gifts of life insurance: Life insurance can be an excellent planned giving tool for a donor who wishes to make a substantial gift to charity (or charities). Moderate premiums are spread over time resulting in a large gift at the time of death. New or existing life insurance policies may be donated. Usually, some variety of permanent life insurance is used to fund gifts of this type.

The 2000 Federal Budget included enhancements to the tax treatment of gifts made using life insurance, making it a more effective gifting tool for donors. Donors may name charities as beneficiaries of a life policy and have their estate receive tax credits for the gift at death. They might instead, name the charity as both owner and beneficiary of the policy and receive receipts for premiums paid and/or the cash value for immediate tax benefit.

Category 2 – Giving now while you are living

Gifts of Appreciated Securities: The 2006 Federal budget enhanced the incentives for Canadians to donate publicly traded securities (shares or mutual funds) directly to charities by eliminating the payment of capital gains tax on such direct gifts. This enhancement creates an excellent gifting mechanism that may multiply the benefits to you and to your favourite charity (or charities).

The new rules allow you to:

/ Realize significant profits from the appreciated securities you wish to donate
/ Pay no capital gains tax on the gains realized
/ Make a generous gift to charity (or charities)
/ Make use of the excess tax credit generated from this gift to reduce other tax liability

CSS Revocable deposit agreements: This is a combination of investment and planned gift, it is especially designed for donors and investors who wish to put their money to work to benefit themselves as well as their favourite charity (or charities). CSS pays interest on the deposit at current rates, less a one per cent administration charge, shared between the donor and charities the donor selects, according to the terms of the agreement.

The donor retains ownership of their deposit and can have it returned upon notice (as per the terms of the agreement).

Stewardly tip: Letters of direction. Designate a charitable agency (like CSS) as the beneficiary of a charitable bequest in your will. Then file a "Letter of direction" with that agency giving detailed instructions as to the distribution of your gifts to the various charities listed. If in time you need to change the distribution, simply replace the old "Letter of direction" with a new one: it is kept on file with the charitable agency that provides this service.

Readers: Share your "stewardly tips" with the readership of *CC* so that we all can make better use of the resources God has entrusted to us. Submit your suggestions (by mail to *Christian Courier* or by email to my address below) and provide your contact information so that we can acknowledge your contribution or ask you for more details.

Next issue: About Legacies

Rick DeGraaf works for Christian Stewardship Services in Markham, Ontario. Rick's email: rickd@csservices.ca

When you're gone, will your giving continue?

Leave a Legacy.
CSS offers a no-cost home visit, providing professional, impartial advice.

Connecting Donors, Charities & Ministries

Christian Stewardship Services
1-800-267-8890 | admin@csservices.ca
www.csservices.ca

Church

Google finally OKs pro-life ads after long-time ban

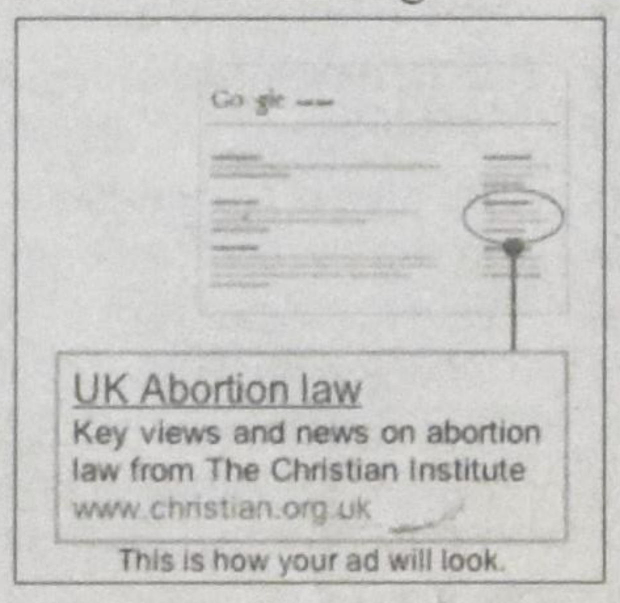
Marian Van Til, with files from TCI

LONDON – For the first time, churches and other faith-based groups across the world may place pro-life ads with Google, the giant online search engine. Google announced the global policy change recently following an out-of-court settlement with The Christian Institute, a British group headquartered in the northern English city of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The Christian Institute is a non-denominational evangelical charity "committed to upholding the truths of the Bible," and existing for "the furtherance and promotion of the Christian religion in the United Kingdom" and "the advancement of education."

As a result of the court action Google reviewed its "AdWords" policy that rejected any anti-abortion advertising tied to "religion." AdWords are Google's searched-related advertising system: the small ads that appear on the right side of Google's web pages which are related to the particular word or phrase the computer user has typed into the search engine.

In March, The Christian Institute tried to place this ad with AdWords: "UK abortion law: Key views and news on abortion law from The Christian Institute. www.christian.org.uk."



This is how your ad will look.

The ad was rejected for "inappropriate content," Google said, because its policy was to reject advertising sites which combine "abortion and religion-related content." Google did allow "non-religious" sites to place ads on the subject of abortion, particularly pro-abortion groups.

In April, lawyers acting for The Christian Institute launched a legal action against Google under the UK's Equality Act 2006 which prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion in the provision of a good or service.

Google's new policy took effect immediately after the court case was won. A Christian Institute spokesperson says, "This is an important issue of free speech and religious liberty, and we are pleased with Google's constructive response to this matter."

'Why God doesn't fully explain pain'

Marian Van Til

John Piper is a Reformed Baptist whose insightful books are well-known to many Calvinists. He is the Pastor for Preaching at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Like many authors and lecturers these days, Piper maintains a blog (for readers unfamiliar with computer terms: an online "web log" where one can write personal thoughts intended to be shared). Piper's blog shares the name of his most popular and influential book, *Desiring God.* (See <www.desiringgod.org>.)

Piper doesn't shy away from difficult topics, as the title above – his words – demonstrates.

Piper has spoken and written before about where God is in our suffering and pain, but in a recent blog entry he wrote, "One of the reasons God rarely gives micro reasons for his painful providences, but regularly gives magnificent macro reasons, is that there are too many micro reasons for us to manage, namely, millions and millions and millions and millions and millions."

Piper notes that "God says things like: 'These bad things happened to you because I intend to work it together for your good' (Romans 8); 'these happened so that you would rely more on God who raises the dead' (2 Corinthians 1); 'this happened so that the gold and silver of your faith would be refined' (1 Peter 1); 'this thorn is so that the power of Christ would be magnified in your weakness' (2 Corinthians 12)."

Piper is good at anticipating his readers' objections. "We can always object that there are other easier ways for God to accomplish those things. We want to know more specifics: Why now? Why this much? Why this often? Why this way? Why these people?"

Wanting to be God?

Piper addresses those questions by saying, "The problem is, we would have to be God to grasp all that God is doing in our problems. In fact, pushing too hard for more detailed explanations from God is a kind of demand that we be God." Like many good preachers do, he illustrates with a story.

"Think of this," writes Piper. "You are a blacksmith making horseshoes. You are hammering on a white hot shoe and it ricochets off and hits you in the leg and burns you. In your haste to tend to your leg you let the shoe alone unfinished. You wonder why God let this happen. You were singing a hymn and doing his will. Your helper, not knowing the horseshoe was unfinished gathered it up and put it with the others. Later there was an invasion of your country by a hostile army with a powerful cavalry. They came through your town and demanded that you supply them with food and with shoes for their horses. You comply. Their commander has his horse shoed by his own smith using the stolen horseshoes, and the unfinished shoe with the thin weak spot is put on the commander's horse.

"In the decisive battle against the loyal troops defending your homeland the enemy commander is leading the final charge. The weak shoe snaps and catches on a root and causes his horse to fall. He crashes to the ground and his own soldiers, galloping at full speed, trample him to death. This causes such a confusion that the defenders are able to rout the enemy and the country is saved.

"Now you might say, well, it would sure help me trust God if he informed me of these events so that I would know why the horseshoe ricocheted and burned my leg. Well maybe it would help you. Maybe not."

Piper makes his ultimate point: "God cannot make plain all he is doing, because there are millions and millions and millions and millions of effects of every event in your life, the good and the bad. God guides them all. They all have micro purposes and macro purposes. He cannot tell you all of them because your brain can't hold all of them.

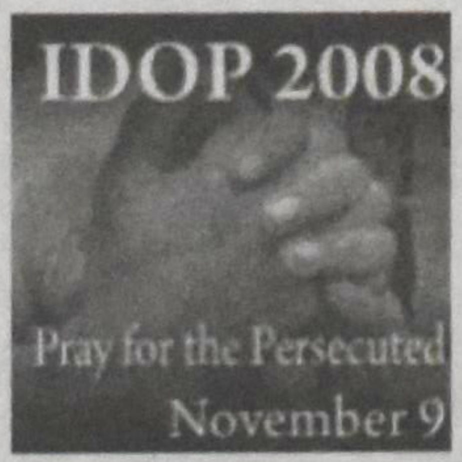
"Trust does not demand more than God has told us. And he has given us immeasurably precious promises that he is in control of all things and only does good to his children. And he has given us a very thick book where we can read story after story after story about how he rules for the good of his people.

"Let's trust him and not ask for what our brains cannot contain."

Sunday, Nov. 9, pray for the persecuted church, ministry urges

Marian Van Til, with files from VOM

BARTLESVILLE, Oklahoma – November 9 has been designated as this year's International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP).



The Voice of the Martyrs (VOM), which has served the persecuted church since 1967, is asking congregations and individuals to join together that day to remember and pray for their suffering Christian brothers and sisters around the world.

Many thousands of believers worldwide are risking discrimination, imprisonment and even death because of their active witness for Jesus Christ, says VOM director of media development, Todd Nettleton.

November 9 will be "an important day in the church calendar," says Nettleton. "Scripture instructs us to remember those in bonds as though we were bound with them. This special day of prayer is one of the ways corporately we do that. Our hope is that this day of prayer encourages people to be active all year long in prayer and support for our persecuted brothers and sisters.

Christians are encouraged to pray for continued boldness and courage for believers as they share the gospel and for hearts to be softened to the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray not only for persecuted Christians, but for the persecutors as well.

Resource kit helps focus prayer

To help congregations pray effectively, The Voice of the Martyrs is offering a Church Resource Kit. The kit includes a six-minute video which VOM suggests can be used during services. (The video can be previewed online at <http://idop.persecution.com>.) This graphic film details the astonishing story of Brother Alex, who survived a massacre by Colombian FARC guerrillas and led his tormentor and would-be killer to Christ.

The prayer kit also includes:

* A Colombia parachute pattern. VOM uses small cloth parachutes to distribute Bibles to terrorists living in violent areas of Colombia. Using the pattern and instructions enclosed, families or church groups can make parachutes which VOM will use to deliver into otherwise inaccessible areas of Colombia Bibles and shortwave radios that can pick up Christian broadcasts.

* Prayer brochures. Twenty-five copies of a prayer brochure are intended to be distributed beyond one's church, to Christian friends who may be unaware of the scope and intensity of persecution of Christians today. The brochure pinpoints the areas of the world where persecution exists, and includes a coupon for additional (free) material that will help brochure readers learn more about today's persecuted Christians. (Additional packages of the brochure are available at minimal cost.)

* 10 VOM special newsletters with a pullout prayer map.

* 10 current prisoner profiles.

* 1 "Kids of Courage" prayer resource. Large (5' by 6') cloth prayer banners are also available. They highlight the countries that human rights groups, some Western governments and Christian agencies and missions have labeled "restricted" or "hostile" for Christians. The banners are not only informative, but are "dramatic reminders to pray for persecuted Christians year-round," says Todd Nettleton.

Only one purpose

The Voice of the Martyrs Inc. is an evangelical and non-denominational registered charity in Canada, the U.S. and various other countries. It describes itself as existing "to glorify God by serving his Persecuted Church" and as "dedicated solely to serving persecuted Christians worldwide." It can only do that, it realizes, by "practicing an uncompromising faithfulness to God."

The Voice of the Martyrs says it accomplishes its mission by "running to help those who suffer for their faith; remembering the families of today's Christian martyrs; rebuilding the Church's witness after persecution ends; reaching out in love to the persecutors; and raising a voice for those who cannot speak."

Churches or individuals who wish to learn more about the Voice of the Martrys or use VOM's resources in order to better participate in the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church will find information at <www.persecution.net> (Canadian website) or www.persecution.com (U.S. site).

Christian leaders in India join *dharna* to protest persecution

Continued persecution in Orissa, thousands flee

NEW DELHI, India – (GFA) Gospel for Asia leaders in India have joined with the heads of other churches, ministries and Christian institutions in a five-day rally in New Delhi to protest the ongoing atrocities against Christians in Orissa and other Indian states, even as GFA President K.P. Yohannan reported new persecution against the beleaguered believers.

Called a *dharna*, the event is an Indian method of seeking justice, traditionally by sitting at the door of one's debtor or wrongdoer and fasting until justice is obtained. This *dharna* began on September 28 and was to last until October 2, Mahatma Ghandi's birthday (and after the writing of this story). A peace march was scheduled to end at the Raj Ghat, Ghandi's cremation site, where Christian leaders would present a memorandum to top government officials calling for action to prevent further persecution of Christians and other minorities.

A one-day *dharna* was held at Raj Ghat in late September to draw the attention of the government to the continuous violence against Christians. Representatives of other minorities joined with the Christians in this peaceful protest, and the decision was made to conduct the longer *dharna*.

"I believe the Lord is going to use this event," Yohannan said, "and I have instructed our leaders all over India to seek out other Christian leaders and meet with them and stand with them in this time of persecution."

GFA-related leaders participating in the *dharna* included Bishop Simon John, Rev. Thomas Varghese, a number of senior staff members from GFA's Delhi office and staff members from a local GFA Bible college.

"Bishop Simon John is one of the most visible Christian leaders in North India speaking out against the abuse of the Christians in Orissa and other states," Dr. Yohannan noted. And at the one-day *dharna*, he was joined by a former prime minister of India, H. D. Deve Gowda.

Former Prime Minister Gowda came to New Delhi, sat with the Christian leaders and criticized what he called "the continuous inhuman acts of the Bajrang Dal," the so-called "Hindu warriors." He appealed to the central government to stop the atrocities against the Christians.

But sadly, even as the *dharna* was going on, the situation in Orissa continued to worsen. "Little is being reported to the outside world now because the media is being kept out, even as entire villages are being destroyed," Yohannan added.

Convert to Hinduism, or else

In a telephone report from India, Yohannan recounted what the radical anti-Christian groups are doing. "The politicians in New Delhi need to know that even now, the radical Hindus are going through many districts, putting a Hindu flag on the Hindu houses to identify them," he explained. "Then they are going to the Christian homes and giving them so many days to convert, or they will destroy their houses. When the Christians refuse to renounce their faith, the Hindus go through and tear down their houses."

Christian leaders from throughout India participated in the *dharna* to draw attention to the persecuted Christians in Orissa.

Christian leaders from throughout India participated in a dharna to draw attention to the persecuted Christians in Orissa

But even as a story on the front page of a leading newspaper called the situation "awful," it reported that the government of Orissa had still not taken action.

As the situation has grown worse, many persecuted Christians are seeking refuge. "One of the worst things I've heard," says Yohannon, "is that the police are harassing the people in the refugee camps – some 15,000 Christians have fled for their lives – and trying to force them to go back to their villages, where the police know they will be attacked and possibly killed. I just have one thing to say to the Christians in the West: 'Keep on praying!'"

Persecution of Christians escalating in Laos

VIENTIANE, Laos (Religious Liberty Prayer Bulletin) – Communism came to power in Laos on the back of the North Vietnamese Communist victory of 1975. This resulted in a "special relationship" between Hanoi (Vietnam) and Vientiane (Laos), so it is often said that Vietnam and Laos fit together geographically, historically and ideologically "like lips and teeth."

The Second Indochina War (the Vietnam War) saw the Indochinese Communists defeat the U.S. and its allies. Among those allies were Laos's ethnic Hmong, who had been recruited by the CIA to block the Ho Chi Min trail. While the war ended long ago, a military campaign against the Laos' Hmong still persists. Aimed at genocide, the campaign involves massacres, the use of chemical weapons ("yellow rain") and forced starvation.

Christians in Laos have long suffered severe and systematic religious persecution at the hands of the Communists. Christianity is labelled a "foreign religion" and embracing it is akin to sedition. Government authorities use violent intimidation and threats in trying to force Christians to renounce their faith. When that fails, they expel them from their homes and villages; and when that fails they arrest and torture them. Occasionally parents will reluctantly renounce their faith to protect their children from starvation in the forest.

Since the U.S. International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 gets its leverage from U.S. economic power, severe anti-Christian persecution has tended to come in waves as the regime tries to balance its pursuit of U.S. economic aid against its determination to maintain totalitarian control.

Prayer-vigil protests infuriate regime

Recently Christians in Laos have reported an increase in religious persecution. The Washington-based Hmong National Development Inc. attributes this to "increased intervention by Vietnam's communist party officialdom and Vietnam's secret police and military."

It is possible the Laotian regime is cracking down on Christianity on advice from Hanoi (Vietnam), where Catholic prayer-vigil-protests have persisted for 10 months.

These have grown to be the largest public demonstrations since the Communists came to power there, and have begun attracting international attention to rights and justice issues. Furthermore, Hmong women from northern Vietnam have been present at the Hanoi prayer vigils, wearing full national dress and playing indigenous musical instruments. The Vietnamese authorities have responded to this by specifically slandering and denigrating the Hmong in the state-run media.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Christian families across several provinces in Laos are suffering appalling persecution. Arising from this, the welfare of Pastor Sompong Supatto, 32, and Boot and Khamvan Chanthaleuxay, both 18 – three believers from a house church in Boukham village, Savannakhet province – is of particular concern. Since August 3, they have been handcuffed with their feet in stocks at Ad-Sapangthong district police detention cell. On that date they were arrested for refusing to sign papers renouncing their faith. They had been threatened several times previously but had continued to worship, regardless.

According to Compass Direct, the authorities have said that Pastor Supatto does not qualify for bail, as his punishment for leading the Boukham church would be "life in prison" – despite the fact that the Laotian Constitution, ratified in 1991, guarantees "the right and freedom to believe or not believe in religions." The teenagers, who are suffering acute pain, infections and circulation problems, will be released only when they renounce their faith.

Today multitudes of Laotian believers are refusing to deny their Lord or forsake worship, accepting rather the cross of extreme punishment and even torture to death, notes Compass Direct.

Laotian Christians request the urgent prayers of the worldwide church.

Reformed ecumenical groups meet in Utrecht to finalize 2010 merger

UTRECHT, the Netherlands (WARC) – Members of the governing bodies of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) and the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) were to meet in joint sessions for the first time starting October 6 in Utrecht. (The meeting had not yet taken place at press time.)

The joint gathering was intended to consolidate planning for the historic merger of the two organizations into the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) that is to occur at a General Council meeting in June 2010 at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich. The theme of that 2010 General Council will be "Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace."

The new body will represent 80 million Reformed Christians around the world. WARC has 75 million members in 214 churches in 107 countries. REC has 12 million members in 39 churches in 25 countries. The Christian Reformed Church is a member of both organizations.

Rev. Peter Borgdorff, executive director emeritus of the CRC and current president of the Reformed Ecumenical Council, is serving as chairperson of the arrangements committee for the 2010 gathering.

The Utrecht meeting includes WARC's officers and REC's executive committee. They will work together to finalize a draft constitution and shape the structure and vision of WCRC. They will also launch a WCRC logo.

"It is a great opportunity to meet our sisters and brothers in REC and to make concrete our dream of a new truly vital Reformed communion that will meet the challenge of God's call to justice and unity in the 21st century," said WARC general secretary Setri Nyomi.

Richard van Houten, general secretary of REC, added, "It will be the first time the leaders of the two organizations will have to work together and they can send an important message to our members about how the cultures of WARC and REC will blend together, working for the common mission God has given them."

The gathering is being hosted and supported by the Protestant Church in the Netherlands. It is the largest Protestant denomination in the Netherlands and the result of a 2004 merger of the Netherlands Reformed Church, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

WARC and REC leaders will worship in local churches on the day prior to the meeting, bringing messages from the home denominations from around the world.

Environment

Flowers & Thistles
Curt Gesch

The art of composting

My friend, Peter, makes me green with envy. Like me, he is a teacher. Like me, he sometimes functions as a substitute teacher. Being a substitute teacher is tough, especially grades 8-12. Getting recalcitrant kids to want to tell you their real names is bad enough, but trying to get them to complete some boring make-work assignment (or yet another DVD) left by their real teacher is about as easy as selling used Hillary Clinton campaign buttons at your Christian school fund-raising garage sale. . . .

But I digress. Peter makes me green with envy because he is not intimidated. He walks into one of these classes to get a greeting as effusive as George Bush at a Taliban cave. . . .

Again I digress. Peter walks into the classroom with a bit of a harried look on his face, arms full of books, papers, and playing cards. Yes. Playing cards. He proceeds to do his bumbling, "Oh, I just dropped the deck. Let me pick those up." [He counts them.] "Oh, my, the ace of hearts is missing. Oh, here it is!" And he proceeds to pull it out of the ear of one of the students.

"Sir, Sir, tell us how you did that! Do another trick!"

Here's where the envy comes in. Peter replies, "After you finish your General Math 9 homework – it's on the board – I'll show you another trick."

Green. His ability to do magic makes me positively green with envy.

*****

There is a kind of magic I can do as well as Peter can, however. I can make compost. Peter uses equipment: he picks up bags of lawn clippings, leaves, anything else that will rot, by driving around town on garbage day. He makes a huge pile of grass, old hay, horse manure, anything he can find, and turns it regularly with his wife's small Kubotaä tractor/loader. After several turnings with the Kubota and a year's work by micro-organisms, the compost is just about perfect for use on his wife's garden.

Being a greener type of person than Peter, I don't burn up fossil fuel making my compost. Not that I am a compost purist either.

Compost good for carrots; carrots good for kids.

There are entire books written about compost. You can buy shredders (run by gasoline, no doubt), special bins, drums that you turn, composting boxes so well disguised your neighbours will compliment you on your minimalist sculpture, never guessing you're a secret composter.

I make my compost with plant material gathered from my own lawn and gardens. And I make it like a layer cake (or lasagne, if you prefer). In the empty 4 X 4 box (made of old pallets, of course) I unceremoniously dump a bunch of dead green stuff: flower stalks, broccoli stems and roots, carrot tops when the chickens are oversupplied. I don't tend my compost most of the time. (I don't put meat or fat or bones in the compost: that's what the dog is for. I don't put vegetable and fruit remnants in the compost: that's what the chickens are for.)

Then comes a little layer of bacteria. You can get that bacteria from scraping the bottom of an old compost bin, or by throwing on some topsoil. (Steal some from between the rows of taller plants and no one will ever know.)

Some nitrogen for the bacteria to gnaw upon comes from my pigeons. "Poop!" I command and pigeons – as any city-dweller walking under an overpass knows – produce a lot of the stuff. So I throw a shovel-full or two of that stuff on the pile (we're up to three layers now), and begin again. If everything is dry moisten with a hose; it's a great job for a neighbour kid. Recommended pay: one peppermint for five minutes spraying.

You can make things as complicated as you want by shredding the materials to make them rot faster. There are methods of composting like the 14-day method, which works. I've tried it. But it's too hard for anyone who has age-related-sloth. Once I even put all the stalks on a 4 X 8 foot sheet of plywood and then ran the lawn mower over and over until they were reduced drastically in size and bulk. It worked well, I guess, but seemed a lot of work for me.

I have one little trick that I'll pass on, however. Things like broccoli stalks and roots, sunflower stalks, etc., are pretty tough going for bacteria and fungi, so I keep a machete next to the compost box. Hacking a few strokes on each plant makes entry points for your microbiotic friends and may help you work off a little aggression at the same time. (I refuse to name the political party I think of as I assault the broccoli, except to say that it is not the Green Party. . . naturally.)

*****

For most of the year I don't even touch my compost boxes. I figure that little critters are doing their work and why should I bother them? I try to keep one box as a "working" box to accept donations of things the chickens spurn or the dog would regurgitate. Orange peels and banana peels go into this working pile as well as all the leftover coffee and coffee grounds (including filters). Tea and tea bags, too. I collect coffee grounds from the office and dump them on this working box once a week, too. Coffee seems to have a stimulating effect on compost, just as it does for people. (For those who are wondering if I use decaf coffee grounds, well . . . when it comes to drinking decaf, "I've never been that thirsty.")

As I said, for most of the year I don't touch my compost boxes. There are two times of feverish (well, mildly feverish) activity, however. The first is when I empty the old compost and spread it on the garden. I often do this in July, after vegetable plants or perennials are up and growing. I spread the compost – finished or partly-rotted) as mulch between the rows and let the worms do the incorporation into the soil.

The other time is in late summer and fall when I fill the boxes. This morning, for example, I filled one box. There were monkshood stalks, broccoli stalks, dead poppies and other annual flowers, and a lot of lawn grass. I have huge piles of lawn grass in the fall because, well, because I don't mow the side lawn from June onward. Instead, as I've written in *CC* previously, I make a grass maze. In the fall the grass gets mowed and used as layers in the compost boxes where it adds lots of nitrogen as well as organic material.

I like to top off the finished piles with a layer of grass clippings. Many people cover the piles with black plastic for the winter.

As of this writing I've filled two compost boxes. They are "working" nicely – bacteria and then fungi breaking down tough fibres and one of the piles has already been reduced in bulk by about 1/6.

Now I get to sit back for a few months and rest while the microbial beasties help me earn my title, a Son of Adam (Hebrew: adam) – Keeper of the Ground (adamah).

******

Peter, on his tractor, doesn't work as hard as I do with my fork, rake and wheelbarrow. No doubt he is more efficient. With all that extra time, he gets to grade more math papers. I've also invited him for morning coffee next week. Because he has so much time on his hands, I'll let him clean my chimney and cut some firewood, thereby easing his conscience: guilty about burning up so much fossil fuel. (While he is here, maybe he will teach me a card trick, too.)

By the way, Peter can't garden. He is pretty sure of the difference between raspberry canes and lawn grass but no good at all at distinguishing between a daphne and delphinium, euphorbia and euonymus.

There is still hope for Pete, though, as long as he remains a tiny bit envious (maybe light green) about other teachers' gardening skills.

Curt Gesch (curtgesch@hotmail.com) is teaching part-time in Houston, B.C. He helps the children learn about wheat, grouse, canola, and carrots.

The Other Comforter (2)

And I will ask the Father,
and he will give you another Counselor
to be with you forever

John 14:16

Ii Jean Restout, Pentecost*[French Neoclassical Painter, 1692-1768]*

The Eternal One is Love. That's why nothing strokes the ego and encourages us more in sin, selfishness and depravity than to be honoured, praised, loved and admired.

He is Love. We arrive at a deeper level of understanding and a real awareness of sin when our souls are torn because we disappoint that love. There is no real sorrow over a personal setback unless we also grieve at the sorrow we have caused him who loves us.

And, likewise, there is also no true faith and devotion, unless it turns to the love of the Holy One, and finds there an indescribable, irresistible and gripping desire to be near unto God, and to take shelter in his tabernacle.

Do you understand misery to be anything like that?

We are not asking about full comprehension, but just a little understanding, and some longing for his inscrutable ways. Not a longing for a new heaven and earth, but for the One who sits enthroned there, the source of all heavenly blessings. Do you know anything about that?

We are not talking about a passionate imagination, or emotional expression, not even about intense feelings of ecstasy. We mean a calm, quiet, deep consciousness which will show you with increasingly greater clarity the drought in your own heart, the need of your own passions and the pain of your inner self. This will teach and correct you, indicating what is lacking, what is the foundation and origin of your all-consuming misery. This is the misery which you have hardly recognized as such.

Then you will find laughter among your tears, my brothers and sisters, because that is the sign and proof of the love that has already been poured out into your heart. It was not yours by nature. The fatal wound brought on by the fall results in a life of misery while we are blind to the real character of that misery. To feel the pain of love means that we have once again received such love. There is no salvation in "the One who loved us first" unless this was followed by "the love of God poured into our hearts" [Rom 5:5].

Such an awakening of the pain of love is the work of the Lord throughout the ages, as he opens himself up to his chosen, his elect, and, we may even say, his blessed because they are the "afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted" [Isa 54:11]. In their wretched state grace came to them and showed them God's initiative in bestowing his tender mercies.

In their experience of grace they knew once more that they again belonged to the Eternal One. They were once more conscious of their need for God because they were created for the Holy One of Israel. Created, not to be consumed by him, like the sacrificial lamb, but to be cherished as the object of his love, like a friend loves a friend, or a lover adores his beloved; to live with the Eternal One a life in which he communes with them, and the self responds to him.

Of course they never experience the full depth of this love, but they are moved along by that stream, always moving away from what is visible with the naked eye, as they seek and focus on the Eternal One. But they could not find him. The "world" always interfered. As did their life with its needs, its riches, its hustle and bustle. But far more interference came from the "old self" shamelessly prostituting itself to other gods. Then they no longer recognized their own love for the Lord, and did not long for him anymore. They no longer called on him, nor did they pray. These are faithless believers, with only a show of sainthood.

That is a true life of misery, a life of a thousand deaths.

Such it was for the woman for whom "the children come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to deliver them" [Isa. 37:3].

For those who cling to superficial lifestyles, or those who live in terror that grips the heart at the thought of having to enter heaven and come face to face with the Eternal One, there is comfort in the knowledge that they will be reined in through chastisement. That is because their situation is unsustainable.

There are two fires raging, the one in front and one behind, to say nothing of the consuming fire within. Such persons are really highly favoured, so much so that the love of God is shed into their hearts. Love is the reason why the grace of God presents itself as a tempest, driving such people on and pushing them until they are too exhausted to endure it any longer.

The world opposes them; their own hearts accuse them, and sin and the devil dance a wicked dance around them to obtain their mortal soul.

If only their souls had wings, they could fly away from this life full of temptations. It is in their power to do so, and they could take their own life in suicide. But there is a strict command against that as well. Once more they face a consuming fire. It is the grim revenge, which curses all suicides as an outrage, a shame, and a violation of God's holiness.

Walled in from all sides, there is no way out, no escape. There is nothing left but to submit without any comfort, being totally vulnerable to any evil power, which they cannot control, with only a prayer on their lips, "Oh that you might return; that there might be windows into heaven". They are "Like a deer panting for water".

Great is this thirst for the living Triune Holy God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Such thirsting cannot be quenched until all that obstructs and opposes or clouds the path has disappeared. It will be stilled only when there is no longer a world to draw it, nor time to exhaust it, no sinful heart to distract, nor the Devil lurking in the darkness to lead us away from the one true God.

The thirsting child only finds what it seeks when there is no longer a partial commitment, when there are no threatening clouds, or coldness of flesh. Only when tomorrow can no longer rob you of what yesterday had given, will the soul possess loving admiration and true adoration.

For then your boundaries are no longer a boundary for the Holy One. You will be taken up into the congregation of the saints in heaven; and that congregation in turn is enfolded by the Mediator and by the Spirit pouring forth from the Mediator as the Head drenching his body. That Spirit draws you into himself, to live in you and to fulfill in you all that can be fulfilled with the fulness of God.

Now, that will not happen on earth. It does not even come to completion when we die. It will not be accomplished until that day when he returns in all his glory.

But the Merciful One does not leave it at that. He does not ignore the comfortless condition of his uncomforted ones. For, after all, he is your Saviour! His name is Compassion. That's why he arranged for our salvation, and you, his blessed ones, who know the pain "of the love that was poured out into your hearts" [Rom. 5:5] will never be without a comforter, because he has sent *the* Comforter.

This same Comforter appeared to the Patriarchs in visions and appearances with judgements and divine messages.

The Israelites in the time of Moses noticed the robe of the Comforter rustling when the waters of the Red Sea parted, when the manna rained down from heaven, and when they saw him in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. This Comforter continued to appear to the people of the Lord in the symbols of his holiness in the ark of the covenant, in the hand that saves them, in dreams and visions, and especially in the word of the prophets. When the era of shadows came to an end, the Son appeared, and every soul that thirsted for God clung to him, and was comforted and blessed by experiencing his love. But he did not stay; the cross appeared, and their hearts were troubled again. The souls of the believers shuddered like the leaves in the tops of the trees shudder in the night breezes. But then they heard the promise, "My dear children, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" [John 14:16].

And then Pentecost came, and God himself descended into their hearts, to live in the congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He returned to the temple he had chosen, saying, "Here is the place of my rest" [cf. Isaiah 66:1]. That's when rest really came. A rest from our comfortless plodding. A foreshadowing of the eternal rest, which remains for the children of God.

Note: *This is part of a series of meditations by Abraham Kuyper translated by Jack van Meggelen.*

Story

A delicate line

Wayne Kallio

Wade's eyes fluttered open. From his couch his gaze took in the rustic gray panel board of the living room wall, the book shelf, then flicked through the white vertical blinds to focus on the pulsing red neon sign of the Esso gas station across the street.

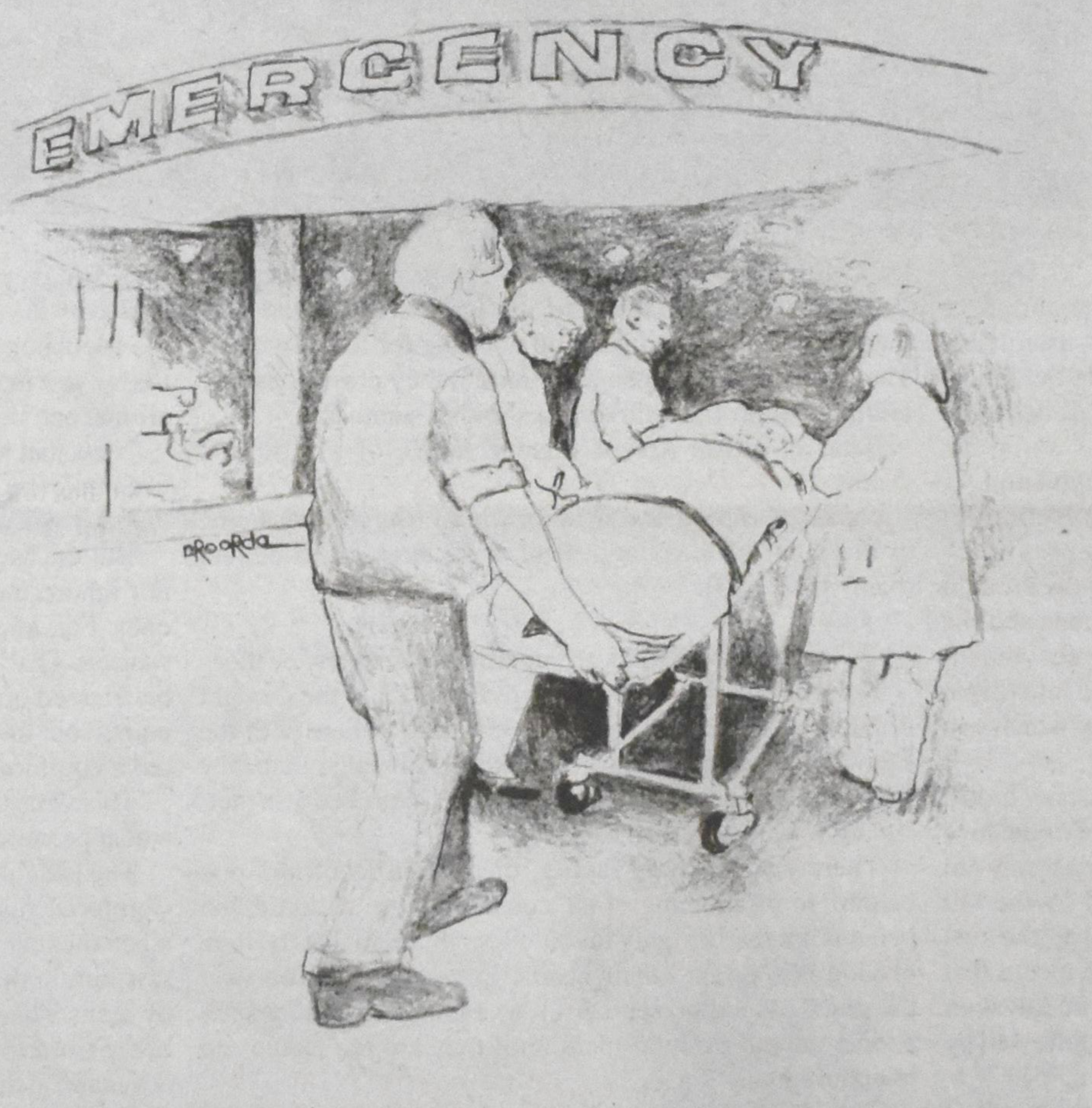
"Why, I'm still here, still alive" he thought, with the innocent wonder of a child delighting in a new visual discovery. "This must be how babies feel every time they awaken, every time they look about and see an object for the first time," he thought. "What a delightful perspective!" He recalled the delight he'd felt as a young child, looking through the kaleidoscope he'd received for his birthday – with each turn, new patterns and colors. Now, with each awakening, a new sense of wonder.

"I'm alive!" He said it aloud this time, though no one – at least no one in this world – could hear him. He laughed aloud at his discovery, delighted. But the sound of his voice in the still room jarred him, and he suddenly felt foolish. In fact, the magic of wonder now shattered, and he felt a pang of regret – regret that he was here, in this familiar room, at home, for he felt sure that with his awakening, he had just re-crossed the boundary back into this world. Surely he had tasted heaven, for wherever he had come back from, there was no jangle, no discord, only a deep, wonderful peace. He had embraced it, for it had wiped away his pain – and his fear. So easy it had been to enter! One moment he had been here, the next there. Such a wisp of a curtain between the two! So easily he had passed from one to the other. Like the filament of a spider's web, so delicate was the line between life and death. He had thought he had crossed it, but now he was not so sure. Now, as awareness of the world about him returned, he felt a sudden agitation, as though he were caught, once again, in the web of teeming life, and knowing that, just as he had fought against it time after time, its pressures would entrap him once again. He recalled, as his conversation with Marnie had already recalled for him earlier, while he was still in St Paul's Hospital, that prophetic exchange of words. . . .

He had been working late, as usual, first completing the two new estimates for storm-damaged roofing and broken windows, then gathering the tools and materials necessary for the next day's roofing job. That was routine. For three months now he had been doing this – working with the roofing crew (on top of his regular office duties) because they were short of help. Winter would soon be upon them, and they still had six or seven roofs to do. Tonight, he had to put new panes of glass into Mrs. Jacob's upstairs storm windows. Well, not that he had to do it; it just made sense, for then they could install them while up on the roof tomorrow and save a trip later.

As he had been removing the shards of broken glass, Marnie had come into the shop to see what was keeping him. She looked annoyed – or was it just a frown of worry that crossed her face?

"You know," she said, matter of factly, "you're going to end up with a heart attack one of these days if you keep on pushing yourself like this."



"Not me!" he had quipped. "I was a farm boy, remember. I've been in good shape all my life."

That had been Monday evening. Wednesday morning, the prophesy unfolded, slowly, almost deliberately – three evenly-space attacks, each one increasing in intensity.

The first allowed him enough ego to shrug it off. "Just bronchitis," he told the guys, heaving another bundle of shingles into the one-ton Chev and wiping the cold sweat from his brow.

Not so, the second. Forcing him down, head between his knees, it taunted him: "See, maybe she was right!" so that he went white, not from the pain, but from the sudden consciousness and significance of her words. So overwhelmed was he by this realization that he submitted meekly when his boss had suggested they run him over to the local emergency "just to check things out."

It was her warning that hammered at his conscience as he lay on the stretcher, the electro-cardiogram wave suddenly going into its crazy dance, sending the two doctors running for morphine and nitro, and forcing him into knee-jerk sit-ups, waving his arms to get air into his lungs.

"So, farm boy!" the attacker mocked, "you've been healthy all your life, eh! But what if your life ends now? Are you really in control? Are you really so strong that you can fight death?"

It was a rhetorical question, and of course he knew the answer, He had always known the answer, but it had floated around in the back of his mind as all other such "givens" do and had no intercourse with everyday life. But now, as never before, he not only knew, but felt the deadly truth, It hammered at his soul, "you could die, you could die, you could die!"

Not that dying was so shocking or even fearful; it was just that he hadn't planned for it. Things had always gone, more or less, according to plan, and if not, why, there were always alternative plans. His was a resilient nature; he could roll with the punches and face change head on. He had, in fact, learned to welcome change, for it perked things up somehow, freshened and sweetened life – for awhile at least. He had always prided himself in his very decisiveness; it was a trait that his father had lacked, and as this had often frustrated him as he grew to manhood on the family farm, he had determined that it would neither characterize nor constrain him.

But this change was too sudden. It made him feel uncomfortable, as though he wasn't quite ready . . . yes, that was it – he wasn't quite ready. For he now saw his self-pride, saw how, though he had been endeavoring in faith, it had clung to him, making self- reliance a god and giving him a false sense of security.

Now this security was shattered. He felt the force of God's hand upon him – as it had always been, he admitted – and he knew that only in the palm of that very hand could true security be found.

How relieved he had been that Marnie had made it to the local hospital before the ambulance whisked him away to the city. "Can you bless me?" the words had simply tumbled out of his heart when she entered the room. How at peace he felt then, having heard and believed even this sin of self-pride, as well as all of his last sins and doubts forgiven "in Jesus name and redeeming blood." Now he felt ready, ready to accept whatever was the will of God – even the end of his life here on earth. For his heart no longer hammered within him; rather, he felt within it the peace of heaven. He closed his eyes . . . .

He knew, now, that he hadn't died. But he felt that he'd been somewhere, not just sleeping – somewhere in a haven away from the consciousness of everyday life. This sudden feeling of being transported from one realm to another was a new experience, yet how many times had it happened already? The days in St. Paul's hospital, when he had first felt it, first realized – with initial disappointment – that he might live, were far behind. He knew, too, that his life would never again be quite the same. He had been wounded. He could no longer perform the heavy physical work he had frequently done, and enjoyed, before. His choices would be limited. But happiness bubbled within him. The choices were given and directed by God! How light this knowledge made him feel! What need had he to push, to drive, to prove himself? If he could no longer carry bundles of shingles up the ladders, so what? Had not God guided him in his decisions and blessed his work up till now?

"I'm alive!" He felt no regret as he softly mouthed the words yet again, for even this extension of life was God's gift to him, personally. "I'm alive," he whispered, gazing at the pulsing red Esso sign in perfect contentment.

Wayne Kallio (wmkallio@yahoo.com() is a semi-retired high school and college English teacher. He lives in the small town (pop @ 2600) of Outlook, Saskatchewan. He currently spends some of his time substitute teaching in area high schools and at the local Community College.

Country Living
M. van der Galien

How to pick out farmers at an IPM

Last month Bruce County in Ontario (close to Lake Huron) hosted the International Plowing Match (IPM). Organizers of the big event at Teeswater expected about 80,000 visitors. The weather co-operated and 84,000 people attended the five-day event.

I've attended many IPM's over the years. I hope that the IPM will continue for many more years.

Next year the IPM will be held in Earlton, which is north of New Liskeard in northern Ontario. The event has never been held that far north. The farthest north was at Pembroke (Renfrew County) in 1994. Over 100,000 people attended that IPM.

I spoke with some of the IPM organizers of the Earlton and Temiskaming area last year and those folks are very proud to have the event on their flat agricultural land. It's only fair that northern Ontario gets to host an IPM.

Some people say the IPM is just a big flea market.

They say if you take out the food concession stands and all booths that want to sell you things, there's not much left but antiques.

I've heard people complain that it's not right counting all the little booths in the huge tents to get a big grand total of exhibitors. It doesn't give a true picture.

I've heard people complain that it's hard to figure out where to go – even with a map of the tented city. People walk continuously and look lost.

I've heard people complain about rough grounds, rough bumpy roads and bumpy wagon rides. That's a common complaint.

People complain about slow food service.

People complain that mostly retired farmers and school kids go to an IPM and that the real farmers go to the Outdoor Farm Show, which is held two weeks earlier in Woodstock, Ont.

Sure, the IPM isn't what it used to be. The big corporate sponsors aren't there. It's up to the local dealers to exhibit their wares. The antique section is incredible. The IPM is still a great place to visit, see things and meet old friends and neighbours. There are lots of interesting things for the women to see.

Say, can you pick a farmer, or farmers, out of a group of people? Chances are you can if you look at what they are wearing and how they walk.

A few years ago I helped out at the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) booth when the IPM was held near Ottawa. CFFO had an environmental survey for farmers to fill out. My co-worker for a two-hour shift in the afternoon was a retired professor from Hull, who, of course, could speak French.

I don't recall how he was signed up for the stint – maybe because he was bilingual. Our job was to stand in the two doorways of the booth and invite farmers in and ask them to fill out a 10-question survey. The professor was a little frustrated at the beginning of our shift. He was targeting the wrong people. Men with no tan and soft well-manicured hands are not the kind of fellows you want to welcome to a farm booth to fill out a survey on manure, fertilizer, herbicides and other environmental questions.

Most of the non-farmers would politely tell the professor that they don't farm and don't know the first thing about agricultural affairs.

I knew many of the people going by and would greet the farmers and ask them to fill out the survey. If the guy going by has tough hands and is wearing a corn seed cap, he most likely is a cash-crop farmer. If he's walking a little bow-legged and wearing a cap with Surge, De Laval or other milking equipment, he's a dairy farmer. If the man has big hands and is wearing a John Deere, Case IH or Ford-New Holland cap, he's a farmer.

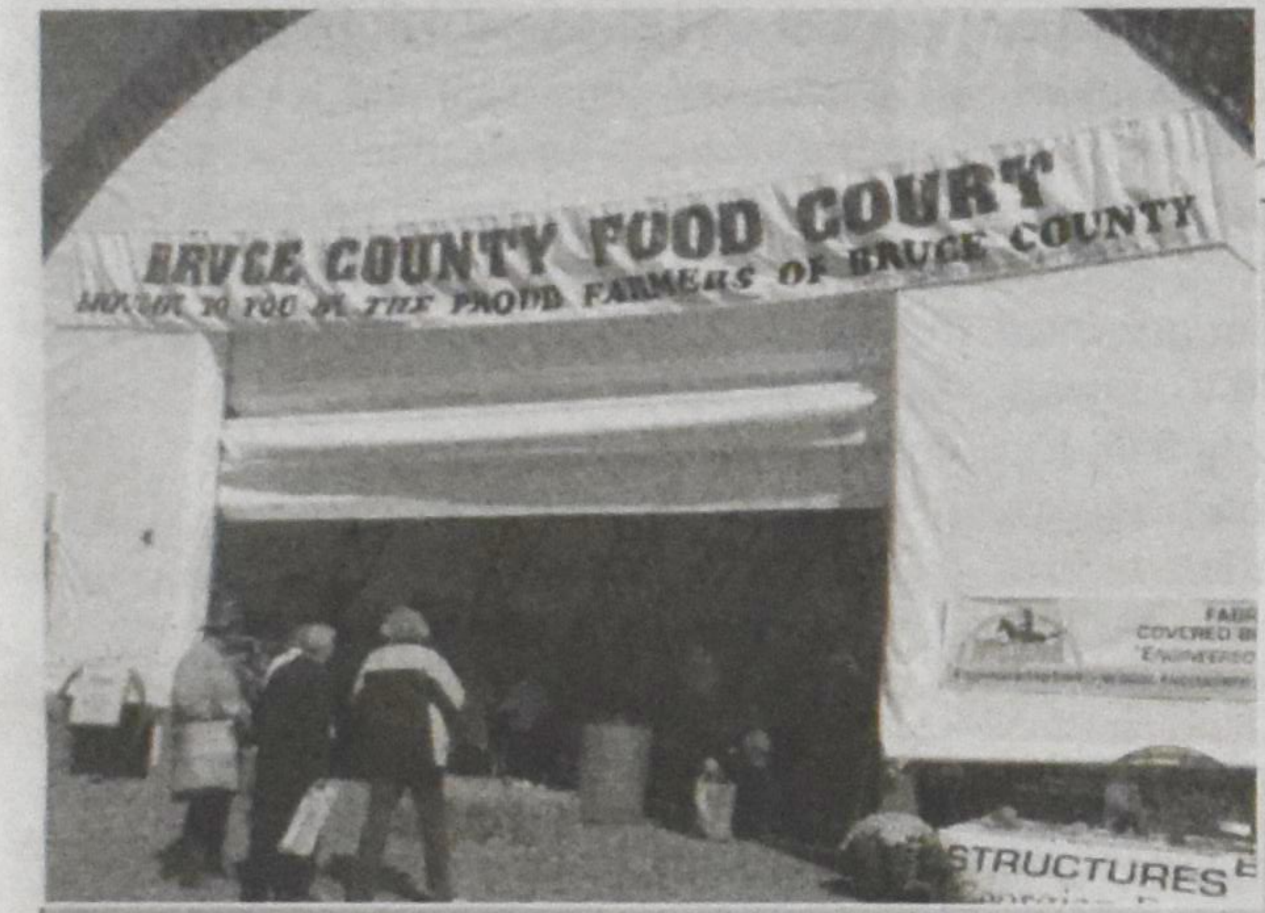
I was successful in getting the farmers to fill out the survey. Most farmers are good stewards of the land and they care about the environment. It was a topic farmers could relate to.

But my co-worker wasn't catching on who to lure into the tent. I finally went over and gave him some hints how to pick farmers, or rural folks, out of the throng of people who sometimes went by the booth. He looked surprised. So simple! Sometimes we guessed wrong. Construction workers can look like farmers. But why aren't they on the job on a weekday?

I hope there's a bus, or busses, going to the Temiskaming IPM and Rural Expo. It's on September 22-26, 2009.

I'll be going!

Maynard vander Galien (maynard@renfrew.net) farms in Renfrew County in Ontario. He wasn't at last month's IPM because he and Helen Mae Waite got married on September 20. The wedding ceremony was held at their new cottage house with 100 guests attending. The weather was perfect for the outdoor ceremony.



Friendships

Eating my words

Angela Bick

Emergency is a worrisome noun

The summer of the Northeast Blackout, we lived "north of Princess" in Kingston – a part of town even worse than the student ghettos. There was a housing project across the street, complete with screaming matches from the run-down Victorian duplex on the corner. Our bedroom window opened onto the sidewalk, which was a hairsbreadth from the road; sometimes I'd wake up in a cold sweat, certain that a car was about to careen over the curb and smash through our wall.

Three small rooms made up our quarter of the house. Dana was the other downstairs occupant, an international student from Amman, Jordan. In the same graduate program, we quickly became friends as well as neighbours. Dana is a Palestinian Muslim, although she does not wear a head covering of any kind. We exchanged class notes, split the cost of textbooks, and read over each other's essays. I learned to value her perspective on Canadian life – not just in the classroom, but day-to-day as well.

Often, the smell of cooking would draw me to her apartment. She has a recipe for Lentil Soup that is so easy it practically makes itself. She served us warm pitas with baba ganoush, fresh tabbouleh salad, and the honey-sesame candy that her mother mailed direct from the Middle East every few months. Yoghurt is a staple in our household, and Dana ate it, too, although she served it as part of the meal rather than dessert. She taught me how to make falafels out of spicy fava beans and ground chick peas. Shaping the dough into little balls and dropping them into boiling oil is remarkably similar to making olliebollen. Instead of the icing-sugar dip, however, falafels taste wonderful with a little hummus.

On August 14th of that summer, you may remember, a blackout left an estimated 10 million people in Ontario and 40 million people in eight States without power. I had just met Dana, but it didn't take long before we were sharing flashlights, food and stories. We may have lost a few packages of frozen ground beef, but the friendship that began was far more important. After the blackout, it seemed like everyone had an anecdote about interacting with strangers. Emergencies create that kind of opportunity. It's a chance to move beyond our rigid and largely individualistic routines. That night the stars were out, televisions were off, and the streets were crowded with people in an excited, almost festive, mood.

It wouldn't take any of us long to come up with a list of North American problems right now – read any newspaper headline or eavesdrop after church, and you'll get the idea. We may live in a relatively wealthy, well-educated part of the world, but that doesn't mean we feel secure or even grateful. Plus, we have our own raft of issues: violence, the breakdown of families, drug and alcohol abuse, health problems, materialism, environmental degradation. . . .We can blame these problems on sin, but we're still responsible for grappling with each one in light of biblical principles. Sometimes the issues seem overwhelming – far too much to do anything about on our own. And surely God *will* help us. Could he help us, I wonder, become humble enough to look for his hand in other quarters, too? What can we learn from the stranger we might meet the next time the lights go out?

International students have a unique perspective on our culture; sometimes, a guest might suggest just the right solution for something we may not even have realized is a problem. If you know a university student in the middle of mid-terms right now, invite him or her to dinner. Ask a refugee family over for coffee after church. I'm not an investment banker or a political pundit, and I refuse to be scared by their dire predictions. Crisis coming up? Great! Maybe I'll finally talk to those people across the road when we get together to compare canned food recipes and exchange army blankets. Maybe they'll have a spice that transforms my ordinary fare into something unexpected and unexpectedly satisfying. Emergency may be a worrisome noun, but new and wonderful things might – as the *verb* suggests – emerge.

Jordanian Lentil Soup

1 or 2 potatoes
lots of carrots

Boil the potatoes and carrots until they get soft. Mash them and fry together with a handful of **onions** and **garlic**.

1 cup lentils
2 cups boiling water

Add the lentils and water to the vegetables. **Pepper, salt and vegetable stock** to taste. Bring everything to a boil, then let simmer for 30 minutes.
Serve garnished with parsley and yoghurt.

Angela Reitsma Bick will be taking a two-month break from the CC. She still welcomes your recipes and stories connecting social justice, food, and simple living at al_angbick@hotmail.com.

Simply put or when less is more

Jan Johnson

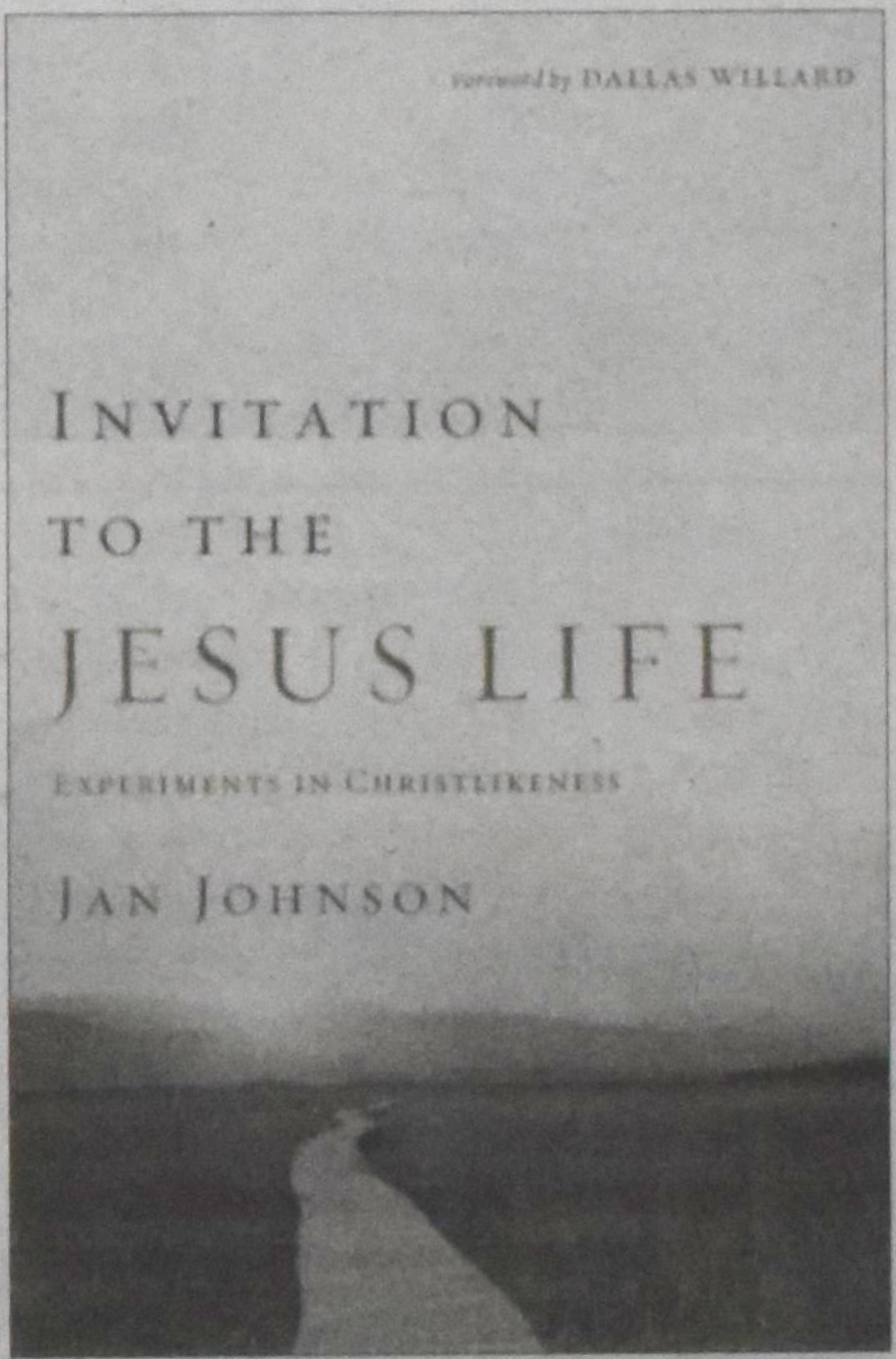
As my friend rehearsed for me what she planned to say to her husband, I could see myself in her manner. She built her case, presented her view, and left no clever phrase unsaid. She raised her voice to emphasize her point, lowered her voice to appear agreeable, and paused dramatically when nothing else worked. Speaking to myself as much to her, I asked, "How about if you 'say it short,' grin, and be quiet? Then let him think about it."

Like my friend, I have for years presented my ideas to anyone who would listen with a song, a dance and some snazzy flair. But I've concluded that this approach reveals my lack of trust in God and failure to love others. I've asked God to help me develop a-less-is-more way of speaking.

Keep it simple

We often use words to get our way. Without realizing it, we dominate conversations by interrupting and exaggerating. We think we're right, and we want others to share our beliefs or accept our advice. Other times we're concerned about our reputation so we rattle on to defend ourselves.

In Jesus' day, "evasive swearing" was common. As long as they avoided swearing by God's name (instead by heaven, the earth, Jerusalem or even their own head), they could say anything and not mean it (See Matt. 5:33-36). This allowed them to impress others while being insincere. In contrast to their showy speech – and ours – Jesus' instructions sound radical to a world that routinely speaks in italics: "Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'" (Matt. 5:37).



Taking our words to heart

Jesus' teaching hints at our need to examine the motives behind our words. Since most of us are concerned about what others think, we use words to make a good impression. Knowing this helps us recognize when it might be best to remain silent.

A while ago, some people I was serving with asked if I planned to attend a concert they were giving the next evening. I smiled and said no. I decided not to give my reason (I'd been traveling a lot and I was reserving the next day for a sabbath) because if I explained myself, I would probably sound as if I were lecturing them about practicing a sabbath. So I smiled again and asked them to tell me about their plans — which they loved doing! Less really was more.

True simplicity of speech flows from a heart filled with the compassion, truth, and love of Jesus: "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34). As my heart mirrors the heart of Christ – caring for others, trusting God with my reputation, abandoning my desire to have my way – my heart will direct my mouth to state an idea briefly and peacefully and then allow others full freedom to respond.

Speech therapy

Certain practices help us shift our conversations away from self and allow God to retrain us in speaking simply. They grow our confidence that God will work in our conversations without our over-the-top efforts. Here are a few practices to consider.

Silence. Times of silence retrain our mouths and quiet our compulsions to impress others through our words. We are relieved of the burden of making small talk. We might even journal about how we use speech to try to adjust others' opinions of ourselves.

Following the example of a friend, I've attempted to practice the situational silence of not giving my opinion unless asked. As I was teaching several nights at a church, I discovered the pastor's daughter was a painter. Since art history is my hobby, I could not resist asking her who her favorite painter was. Even before she opened her lips to reply, I realized I was not listening for her answer. I asked her only because I wanted her to ask me that question so I could tell who my favorite painter was. Recalling my intention not to offer my thoughts until asked, I disciplined myself to listen fully to her.

After she responded, she didn't ask my opinion! So I asked her more questions. As she spilled out her thoughts, she became so

There's a future, even for the individual

Now if there's no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead aren't raised at all, why are people baptized for them?

I Corinthians 15:29

A. A. Van Ruler

With the above questions Paul continues his train of thought. After all, in this chapter he concerns himself with the notion prevalent among some Corinthian believers that there is no resurrection of the dead. Evidently, Paul gets the feeling that the foundation on which he stands as a Christian, as an apostle, and as a human being becomes very shaky. For that reason he gives us a whole series of arguments against the idea that there is no resurrection.

First, in verses 1 to 11, he points out that Christ's resurrection belongs to the core of the apostolic tradition, a core from which the Church has sprung. Moreover, this tradition is bolstered by the testimony of a large number of eyewitnesses.

In verses 12 to 19 his reasoning goes something like this: If there is no resurrection, then Christ did not rise either. However, in that case preaching the gospel makes no sense either because there is no core to it. Then the apostles are false witnesses, then humankind is still lost and will eventually fall into the abyss of perdition.

That, once again, leads him, in verses 28 and 29 to his starting point, namely, the solid fact of Christ's resurrection. Then he explains further: The resurrection and eternal life began with one Person even as sin and death began with one person. However, God's almighty power works through that one Person, Christ, as well, though all of that will happen in its own appointed time. Having passed through death, Christ now reigns among the hostile powers of the world. This is his embattled kingdom.

Baptism for the dead

But Paul senses that he has allowed himself to be sidetracked a bit. For that reason he returns to his earlier exposition and offers new arguments for his understanding. If there is no resurrection, then the preaching of Christ and his resurrection are not the only things that make no sense. Then all manner of things in a Christian's life and that of the Church make no sense either and are quite literally hopeless. One of those things is to let oneself be baptized for the sake of the dead.

Christian authors have, throughout the ages, written many words about this and more than thirty explanations have been offered about what Paul exactly means here. The most natural one simply takes his statement at face value. Evidently Paul comments here on the common practice of *once again* undergoing baptism for the sake of other people who had already passed on. Most likely we must think here of people who had converted to the faith, but had subsequently and suddenly died without having had an opportunity to be baptized. There was a general sentiment in the Christian community that these dead were lacking something essential and that was the mercy of the sacrament, the complete incorporation into the body of Christ. It was also thought that people in the Christian community were somehow, in a very intimate fashion, incorporated into one body – not so hard to imagine, really. On the basis of this belief it was thought that one member could receive another one's baptism.

It is not said that all Christians were involved in this custom of being baptized for the dead. It was only some who took it that far. Paul's alluding to this custom also does not mean that he approved of or even agreed with it. He only quotes it for the sake of another argument.

That argument is as follows. The custom of being baptized for the dead is also meaningless if there is no resurrection. After all, only live persons can benefit from something done for them. If all one can say about people is that they are dead, then it is better not to do anything for them because they cannot enjoy it in any possible way. They can profit from it only if they are destined to rise from the dead.

Concrete application

The apostle's thoughts here are quite sober and realistic. Not only does he take seriously mankind's uniqueness and personhood, but also the reality of death. That personal resurrection is not some vague, general notion; no, it concerns concrete and definite human beings. Those people must one day rise from the dead if there is to be redemption of life.

It is my opinion that we cannot think or speak simply enough about these things. Of course, one can think up a thousand different arguments that make the idea of a resurrection ridiculous. As Prof. Van Dyk used to say, there is a cold and cruel logic about death and the graveyard. There is hardly a human heart that can stand up against that logic.

It is for that reason that most people are quiet about these things. Or else they seek refuge in other ideas. They console themselves with the idea of continuation of soul or spirit after death. They will point at the river of life that continues to flow triumphantly in spite of all deaths. They think that individuals are no more than little waves in the ocean of divine life and that death is simply a falling back of that wave into the ocean. There are others who sum up their whole wisdom in the profound statement that death is death and that's it. They do not think of the deep problem that it entails, namely, that my death cannot ever undo the fact *that I was there* and that I was there as an acting and responsible human being, as a piece, not of emptiness, but of "filled time."

We can take seriously the complete personhood of the individual only if we stick to the imagery of the gospel, namely, that the individual as individual will be delivered from the power of death, that the person will stand before God in the Last Judgment where and when God will discuss everything with him or her, what he or she has done with his creation during a whole lifetime. After that, based on the finished work of Christ, the individual will share in the full glory of God.

Jesus' journey

As was already said, there are a thousand arguments against these simple images. In our day they make a fairy tale out of the Christian faith. Who today can disregard that notion? However, there is still this one thing: The apostles' testimony that Jesus Christ went *through* death and was raised to life on the other side. That gives an eternal perspective to this temporary life of every individual and for that reason a profound meaning. One could even say, "True humanity of the individual is directly linked to the truth or falsehood of the resurrection."

For that reason it is best to leave behind all those arguments and problems about the resurrection for what they are. One can think about these for a whole lifetime. But, meanwhile, one has to stand up, live and be human believing in the apostolic gospel: God does not leave his creatures in the lurch, but raises them from the abyss of death.

Translated from the Dutch by Bram Hoff (ehoff@sympatico.ca) of St. Catharines, Ont.

Simply put *...continued from p. 13*

dear to me. I wondered with joy at the person God put in my life. I almost missed that moment of connection in my hurry to offer my opinion.

Confession. As we become more conscious of our showy speech, we can then ask ourselves what's behind our words – self-importance? pushiness? disregard for the other person? After admitting this, we can ask God to help us plan the next step. Such a step might be putting my hand over my mouth when I want to interrupt.

Attentiveness. Try waiting for an answer after asking others, "How are you?" If we truly listen, their answer will probably prod us to inquire further about them. Try answering questions with a simple yes or no. You won't come across as uncommunicative if you also smile to let the person know you're eager to be attentive.

When speaking with others, ask yourself, *How can I love the people around me and hear their deeper selves in this moment?* State your ideas briefly and instead of thinking about what you're going to say next, look at the people you're talk with and consider what they're saying.

As we allow the practices of simple speech to retrain our hearts and mouths, we too will become the kind of people who see the hearts of others more easily. What a rich way to live.

Jan Johnson (jan@janjohnson.org) is a speaker and the author of Invitation to the Jesus Life: Experiments in Christlikeness, *from which this article is adapted. The author lives in Simi, California.*

Life/Book review

My window seat

Mendelt Hoekstra

Not to the strong is the battle

It happens almost every day and usually more than once. It happens before we eat supper. It happens before we kiss goodnight. It happens before we eat breakfast. We pray. We pray for many things. We pray for the food that we are about to eat. We pray for the little boy from Africa that we sponsor. We pray for everyone around the table. We pray for Mommy in heaven. And we prayed for a friend of ours who had cancer. The four of us pray. The four of us are our 6-year-old son, our 4-year-old daughter and our 2-year-old daughter.

We buried Marisa, their mom and friend, only 10 months ago. Of cancer. Sadly, our children know what cancer can do and hopefully they will one day know what cancer *can't* do. The friend that we prayed for died. Of cancer. So it is a brave thing to continue praying with these specific 6, 4 and 2 year-olds for someone who has cancer.

When our friend died I went home and told our children. It was harder for me to tell my children than to hear the news myself. It brought me back ten months when I needed to do the most difficult thing in my life; tell my children that their mom went to heaven. When I told our children that our friend died, our oldest boy (6) looked at me as if to say, *how did cancer win again?*

It is those moments when life is thick. It is those times when life truly means something, where you can hear the gospel and when you can feel the groans.

The next day, I stood in line at the visitation for our dear former editor Harry DerNederlanden. It was another one of those holy moments that life (and death) can fill you with. During these times, I don't think that anyone is wondering about how the Toronto Maple Leafs are going to do in the upcoming NHL season. I don't think that people are thinking about their mortgage or next week's upcoming meeting.

It is also during these moments when we get to have a beautiful taste of community. The communion of the saints. People come to be with each other. People come to support the family and to give their wishes and pledge their prayers and support. It is a chance for people to be together. It is a chance for people to share stories. There were some wonderful stories told about Harry at his funeral. Stories that I had never heard and stories that when I heard them, I laughed and cried.

I watched Harry's dear wife, Rose, field all those people with grace. I watched Harry and Rose's children shake hands and thank people they have never seen for coming. It was grace to behold. I watched Harry and Rose's children speak wonderfully and creatively to honour their father.

I watched and listened as people studied the words that they were singing. I heard a chorus of people praise their maker for making Harry.

I watched people in the kitchen get the buns and soup ready for the luncheon after the funeral. I watched old friends. I watched people being meet each other for the first time. I watched some *Christian Courier* writers introduce themselves to each other.

I'd like to say that in all these people I saw their strength, but I cannot say that. In all these people, I saw their weakness. This wasn't an example of the strong holding up the weak. I saw the *weak* holding up the weak. I saw the weak clinging to the One who is strong.

Mendelt Hoekstra (mendelt.hoekstra@gmail.com) is the founder and director of the Music Therapy program at Bethesda, an organization owned and operated by the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Ontario, that supports adults with developmental possibilities. He lives in Vineland, ON with his three children.

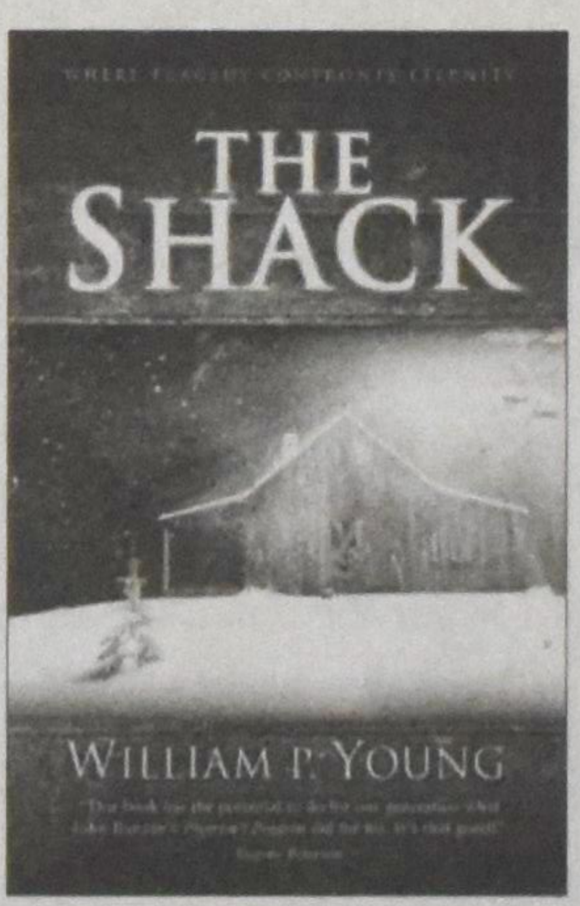
The Shack: Not worth a visit!

Rev. Bill Versteeg

One of the latest fiction books that has hit the hot Christian reading list is called *The Shack* written by William Young. Someone encouraged me to read it to see what I thought about it. Surveying it, I was surprised to hear how many people had read it before me.

The Shack is a story about an uncertain Christian man whose daughter is kidnapped, victimized and then killed in a shack hidden deep in some woods. His life is overshadowed by sadness until one day he gets a note inviting him to meet "Papa," his wife's name for God, at the very shack where his daughter was murdered. He goes, and there he meets his version of the Trinity – a middle-aged black woman named "Papa," who obviously represents the first person of the Trinity; a middle-eastern carpenter labourer type named Elousia, obviously the second person of the trinity; an Asian woman named Saraiou, referring to the holy Spirit; and the fourth person of his Trinity, another woman, Sophia, who, he reminds us, is a personification of the wisdom of God while Scripture tells us that Wisdom was Jesus.

In his dialogues with God, he struggles with questions about his daughter's death. He deals with questions of theodicy, questions that deal with suffering and evil and the reality of an all-knowing, all-powerful and completely good God. Whereas the best theologians, philosophers and minds have struggled with these questions over the centuries, suddenly in the form of a story, William Young comes up with the solution. How is it possible?



Great mystery

Let me start with a positive comment about the book. It paints a picture of God as a relational God, a God who desires and seeks relationship with us. That is good. But in the process of seeking to answer questions of theodicy, Young makes some major sacrifices.

First of all, while trying to sound Christian, there is very little listening to the balance of what Scripture has to say about God. There is a reason why the best minds, philosophers, theologians have difficulty with questions of theodicy, because the sweep of Scripture forces us to mystery, to paradox, as we try to understand who God is. The sweep of the complexity of what God has done in Christ even forced Paul to say in Romans 11:33-36.

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!
"Who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counselor?"
"Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay him?"
For from him and through him and to him are all things.
To him be the glory forever! Amen.

If Paul was overwhelmed with the mystery of God, how does Young resolve his questions of theodicy? Well the truth is, he comes up with a different gospel, a different God and a different salvation than what we find in the Scriptures.

Doctrinal questions

The best way to review Young's doctrine is to ask questions in certain doctrinal categories. This is one of the best ways to discern error in what we read and hear. What is the book's understanding of the doctrines of the triune God, Sin, Salvation, Ecclesiology (the church)?

First of all of all he comes up with a different God. Yes he purports to come up with the Trinity, which sounds very Christian. He pictures the different persons of the Trinity innovatively – that's OK, though it boarders on leading us to goddess worship given that God is pictured as an aunt Jamima woman, given that God is spirit, besides the fact that God has revealed himself as Father, Son and Spirit. And he confuses the wisdom personification of the Old Testament as a fourth person when actually it is Christ. The main problem of his view of the Trinity is that his distorted perspective of power, authority and hierarchy shapes his view of God. For Young, authority means abuse of power. Hierarchy is where abuse of power happens. And, so, in his view of God, there is no hierarchy between Father, Son and Spirit; there is no authority; there is no need for obedience; no room for headship.

These themes do not do justice to the scriptural teachings found in 1 Cor. 11:3 where Paul says,

"Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

An extensive study of that passage, no matter how hard we try to twist under out of it, forces us to acknowledge some form of hierarchy even in the Trinity. This, along with Christ's obvious, intentional and difficult obedience in his incarnation, in his passion in the garden, in his death on the cross, clearly indicates that he submitted his will to his Father in heaven. Contrary to Young's book, which teaches that all three persons of the Trinity became incarnate and died on the cross, Scripture teaches that only Jesus became incarnate. But, of course, Young does this because he can't tolerate the Son's submitting to the Father. To quote God out of Young's book: *"Hierarchy would make no sense among us."* (p. 122)

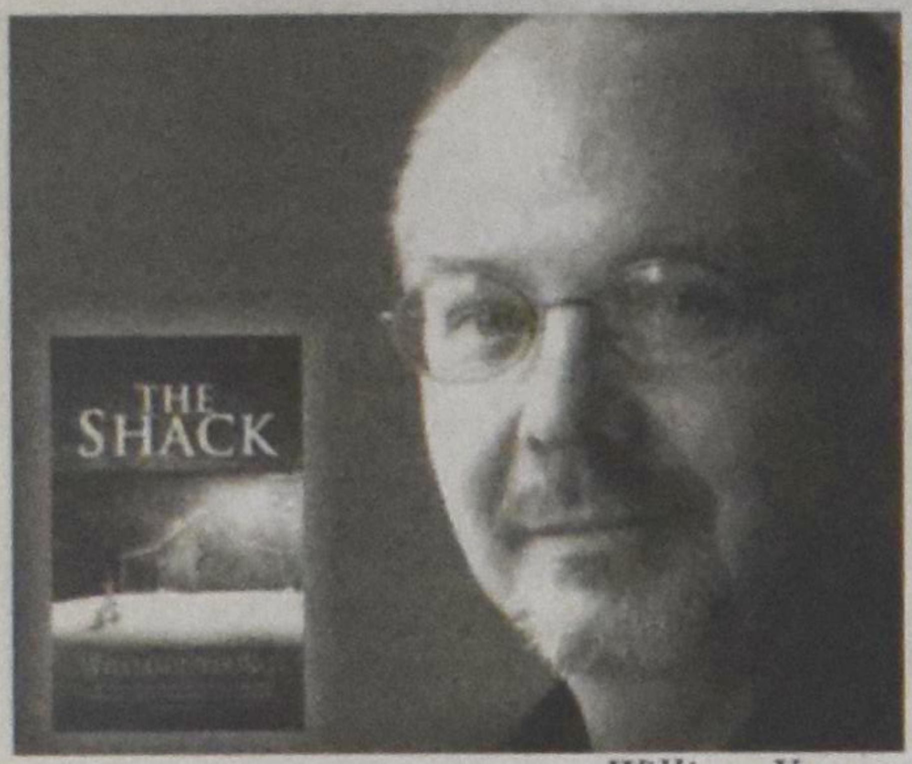
The simple truth is that where there are relationships, where obedience is required, hierarchy exists. Young even goes so far as to point out that God submits to us because there is no hierarchy over us, there is no God's rule over us, there is just relationship. God never commands. God never judges. There is no issue of the wrath of God. And so we see that the concept of sin is no longer an issue of rebellion against God's will and character. Sin, in Young's book, basically boils down to the need to learn to understand yourself, your life and your relationship with God, i.e., Education, i.e., New Age theology. Because sin is not really a concept in this book, neither is the doctrine of salvation. The book lacks a soteriology. At best, its soteriology can be defined as God's choice not to retaliate in his relationship with us. (p. 224).

Free choice

The second theme that we normally find acceptable in Western Civilization is stretched way too far in his

Book review

Ponderings on *The Shack*



William Young

Coby Veenstra

"This book has the potential to do for our generation what John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* did for his. It's that good !"

These are Eugene Peterson's words, describing *The Shack,* and he is exactly right.

I was introduced to the novel a few weeks ago. When I closed the book on its last chapter, I felt as if I had been away on a spiritual retreat and had come home feeling refreshed and with a new enthusiasm for the greatness of our God. I felt a renewed closeness as I was once again clearly faced, head-on, with the depth of God's love.

This well-written allegory is a thought-provoking, heart-warming look at God in his three Persons. It brushes aside dusty clichés and opens the door to a God who is real, warmly alive and intensely interested in his children.

It speaks of God's deep, abiding, unconditional love, his witty humour, and the way he leads us to cut away our pretences and cover-ups until we face him as we are – no masks, no bravado – just us. Then we discover God's love for us as we truly are, and receive the comforting sense that we are not only accepted, but also enfolded, without "having to" do or be anything else. The book accomplishes this by an unexpected encounter between the protagonist, Mack, and three Beings, in the same shack where he had to face his greatest pain. The last sentence of God's first words to Mack are: "My, my, my, how I do love you." And Mack is held in a warm, wrap-around hug. Later, God encourages Mack to "let it all out". Mack weeps and God collects his tears in a vial, very much reminiscent of Psalm 56:8.

Female persona

The fact that the Person we usually connect with "Our Father" appears to Mack as a woman, may be somewhat disquieting, and may lead us to suspect a feminist agenda. But the latter is not the case at all. Mack would not be served by a father-figure, so God, who is Spirit, chose to don a female persona for him. Mack is told that the traditional Gandalf type being would only serve to enforce dusty stereotypes. God as female shouldn't be too surprising to us, since in Deuteronomy 32:11 God refers to himself as a mother eagle, stirring up her nest.

Again and again, God assures Mack of a deep love for him. "Living unloved is like clipping a bird's wings and removing its ability to fly. Not something I want for you."

Soon after his encounter with the Father/Mother persona, Mack meets Jesus, whose first injunction to Mack is to do stuff because he *wants* to, not because he feels *obligated.* "That won't get you points here." Thus endeth the concept of sanctification by works, something which we Christians don't *confess*, but surely *live* all too often.

Triune wisdom

As they are lying on a lakeside dock, looking at the stars together, Jesus has some very profound things to say to Mack. He explains Sarayu, his Spirit, as Creativity, Action, Breathing of Life, and Jesus' own Spirit. The name "Sarayu" means "wind." Again this is a very Scriptural description.

Mack has trouble figuring how these three Persons fit into his idea, and in frustration, asks, "So which of you is God?" The answer is at the same time humorous and profound. In chorus, the Three answer, "I am." Not "We are," but "I am." This is an echo of God's answer to Abraham where he gives us his name, transliterated alternately as "Jehovah" or "Yaweh," "I am that I am."

God, the Father/Mother, explains to a very confused Mack that Jesus' nature was fully human; that he surrendered himself fully to God the Father/Mother and allowed that power to work through him. That concept may be a bit troubling, until the reader goes on to recognize the complete oneness of the three Persons. The Parent even wears the scars of Calvary's cross, so intertwined are their lives.

Sarayu, the Spirit, takes Mack outside and works in the garden of Mack's soul helping him toss out the weeds and teaching him to work in that garden too. This is a very biblical analogy as well.

Surrender completely

Mack learns that his biggest problem in relationship to God is his unwillingness, or inability to surrender to God. The biggest surrender is at the core of his deepest pain, being angry at God and blaming God for it. God explains to Mack that in judging, one places oneself above the one being judged. In Mack's judging God's actions, he is doing that very thing to God himself. It takes Mack a long time to discover that this very judging prevents the healing of his great sadness.

I particularly loved Jesus' answer to Mack when he suggests that we ask, "What would Jesus do?" Jesus responds, Good intention; bad idea." He goes on to explain that rather than try to copy him, we must give up our independence and allow God (all three Persons) to be involved with, and be part of us, so that we see and experience all of life, through God's eyes.

Anointed writing

Much, much more spiritual wisdom is to be found in this book but to elaborate more would dissect the book too much and take away from its warmth and vibrancy.

I firmly believe that the Spirit was at work in the heart of William Young. I firmly believe that it is a modern-day guide to a closer relationship with God, every bit as much as *Pilgrim's Progress*, the writings of C.S. Lewis, Henri Nouwen, Lewis Smedes and many other such anointed writers.

Are there theological questions about some of it? Certainly, and that is to be expected in a subject of this magnitude. But the concerns are far less important than the images portrayed in the book: lying under the stars, talking to Jesus, receiving divine hugs, laughing together, all the things we long for, as God's children. The book brings home with a bang (or a hug) the fact that that God is "especially fond" of each one of us; a message that lies at the heart of the Gospel.

Coby Veenstra is a retired teacher who lives in St. Catharines, Ontario.

The Shack: Not worth a visit! *...continued from p. 16*

book and becomes downright offensive. It has to do with his doctrine of humanity. He subscribes to human free choice. In good Arminian fashion he tells us that we are free to choose whatever we want, and then he goes as far to say that even God will submit to our free choice.

The spirit of the age in North America is very simply that Free Choice is god. Our capacity to think for ourselves, determine our own destinies, determine our relationships, determine our own governments is North America's cultural gospel. We bow to the god of free choice, and, in Young's book, even God bows to our free choice. Not only are the different persons of the Trinity free to do whatever they want, (so the Spirit is a "free spirit") we get to choose to do what we want, believe what we want, and God is happy with that.

Great ambiguity

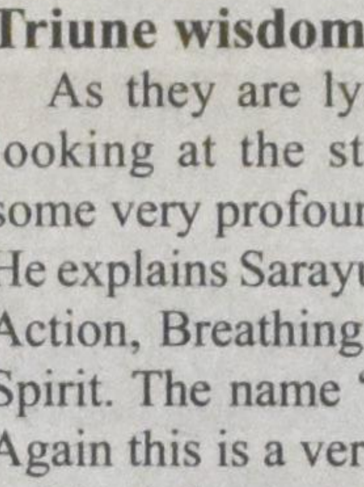
In the end, those who freely chose Buddhism, or any other religion, will somehow get to God because, ultimately, God is happy with their free choice. No longer is faith in Jesus the only way to salvation; now any road will work, although, ambiguously, some roads lead nowhere. Young is ambiguously universalistic because his God bows to our human choice. I find that offensive. *The Shack* was not worth visiting

Because Young bows to free choice, and since power, authority, and command limit free choice, Young regards the church as an idol, a problem, something that limits ultimate free choice. The main character's father was a wife-beating alcoholic church elder. The church is an unsafe place for broken people, where not much of consequence happens. If there is something called the church, the bride of Christ, she is not the place we go to on Sundays. (p. 177) But the Scripture makes it clear that the church, even as a sometimes failing institution, along with all of its family members in relationship to one another, is what Christ died to redeem and build. To ridicule it, as Young in effect does, is to ridicule what Christ loved so much that he was willing to die for it.

I am personally offended that Willow Creek recommends this book to new believers. I am offended that Eugene Peterson, author of *The Message*, speaks highly of *The Shack* and that Michael W. Smith endorses this book. This is not Christianity. This is some Christian themes blended with the poisons of the spirit of our age. It is error worthy of our attention only if we want to see the ways the error is creeping into our Christian faith.

I know that some of you read this book as just fiction. It is written as if it really happened. The preface and the conclusion create that context. But it is pure fiction. It presents a fictional God. It's a book that tries to reinterpret Scripture for us by means of a story. A book that purports to answer questions that theologians and philosophers have struggled with throughout history. The only way it does that it is by exchanging the truth for a lie and worshiping a man-made god rather than the true God of Scriptures. I hope that Christians know their doctrine well enough not to drink of this book uncritically.

Rev. Bill Versteeg is pastor at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Langley, B.C.(pbvcanada@yahoo.com)



valentine
A Division of Merit Vacations
MARTINAIR flights from 470.00
(book early),plus taxes
OAD busreizen for trips from Holland
Last minute sell offs, cruises, packages and air only
Wij zijn van alle markten thuis.
Mississauga 905-890-5333 or 1-800-268-6144
London 519-472-2700 or 1-800-265-1141
TICO Registration #4499356

Women

Equality for Women: an anonymous 1848 female student contribution

Bert den Boggende

In her final column, Vicky Van Andel expressed the hope that *Christian Courier* would publish some articles about women. This article, attempting to fulfill some of that hope, deals with an anonymous nineteenth-century student rather than with such an influential medieval figure as Hildegard von Bingen or twentieth-century social activist Dorothy Day. However, this anonymous student is quite representative, for the majority of people who ever lived remain unknown to historians. They are like the person described in W. H. Auden's poem *The Unknown Citizen*.

Anonymity for women, historian Dale Spender has argued, was due to patriarchy which "depends in large measure on the experience and values of males being perceived as the *only* valid frame of reference for society, and that it is therefore in patriarchal interest to prevent women from sharing, establishing and asserting their equally real, valid and *different* frame of reference, which is the outcome of different experience." There is quite some truth in her statement, but it is not the whole truth. Both men and women often published works anonymously or under a pseudonym. The great British statesman and author Benjamin Disraeli did so and Sir Walter Scott was advised to do so with his novel *Ivanhoe*. In fact, the British *Fortnightly Review*, established in 1862, was the first publication rejecting the prevailing custom of anonymously written articles.

Separate education

Egerton Ryerson

While the student's age and birthplace is unknown (I have a slight suspicion but no proof that she may come from the Montreal area), it is possible to provide some context. In 1836 Ontario's Methodists opened Cobourg's Upper Canada Academy (UCA). Its female department soon flourished. However, in 1841 a significant change occurred with UCA receiving a charter. With the change in name, Victoria College (now part of the University of Toronto) also got a new president, Egerton Ryerson, who wanted female students to be educated separately. As a consequence the next year's female students were excluded, but two new schools were founded to receive them, both initially having the same name. One of them was founded by Hamilton area native Daniel Van Norman, who had been teaching at UCA. Readers of the Burlington-Hamilton area will immediately recognize his family name in one of the main roads. For the first few years Daniel's wife taught the so-called accomplishment subjects, a Miss Barnes taught some academic subjects to the younger students, and Daniel taught the academic subjects to the older ones. In 1844 Daniel gave up his position at Victoria College and devoted all his time to his own school.

Unable to implement his vision in Cobourg, Daniel decided in 1845 to move to Hamilton, where he built the largest and most modern school in town, across from the present Copps Coliseum, naming it the Burlington Ladies' Academy (BLA). Soon the *Hamilton Spectator* stated that the Academy was unique in the province. There may have been some chauvinism in its statement, but students between the ages 8 and 21 received indeed a better education than was available anywhere else in the province. Van Norman wanted the students to receive an equal if not better education than the males at Victoria College, convinced that girls deserved the "facilities and advantages for acquiring an education, in all respects suited to the influential and responsible sphere in which they are destined to move in society" and that their education required "even more skill and prudence than are necessary for the proper intellectual and moral training of the other sex." In fact, he had come to believe that their education had "even a more important bearing upon the progressive movement and well-being of society than that of males." The for-his-time-radical ideas attracted many students from Ontario and beyond.

Against chivalry

At the school's 1848 closing exercises the anonymous student read her essay *Chivalry*, which was published in the Academy's bi-weekly newsletter *The Calliopean*. The essay's contents indicate she was an older student, who had a good grounding in English and history. BLA offered a wide variety of courses she could choose from. Languages, taught daily, included French, Spanish, Italian, German, and for students staying several years Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Other academic courses included geography, math, botany, chemistry, astronomy, bookkeeping, moral and natural philosophy, and rhetoric. The so-called ornamental subjects ranged from vocal and instrumental music to oil and water-colour painting and embroidery. Following John Wesley's interest in health the school offered courses in physiology and calisthenics, the latter described in the BLA catalogue as "a series of exercises, which essentially secure the pupils from all unfavourable influence and confinement to study, and *promotes gracefulness of action* and general health." Not surprisingly, such a remarkable curriculum produced remarkable results.

Chivalry, although not a very long essay, was not unique in its remarkable observations.

Most people when thinking about chivalry, if thinking about it at all, probably have the Middle Ages in mind. It is clear that our student, probably in her late teens or perhaps early twenties, read recently published scholarly British and American books about medieval chivalry, which had received a deadly blow with Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, or as she phrased it, and perhaps paraphrasing Lord Byron's words in *Don Juan*, "the witty Cervantes laughed, at least half of [a wild romanticism for chivalry], out of the world."

However, in the late eighteenth century a revised version began to make a comeback. Sir Walter Scott popularized this revision in his novels and essays, wanting chivalry to become a code of masculine conduct. For Thomas Carlyle the chivalric code became an organizing principle for workers and employers forming a common chivalry of labour which would constitute a harmonious, hierarchical, and ordered society. Benjamin Disraeli associated it with authoritarian, hierarchic, organic, pluralistic assumptions together with monarchy, nationalism and British identity. The nineteenth-century British historian Henry Hallam argued that chivalry had shown great respect for women. The student, who had read Hallam's books, took him to task, flinging his own observations about dissoluteness and immorality back at him and arguing that chivalry had no ennobling influence. While Hallam had still a positive view of women, Carlyle's glorification of chivalry's *noblesse oblige* turned out to be an indignity to them, positing that they disrupted his harmonious society. As one historian characterized Carlyle's position: male is to female as order is to chaos.

Intellectual equals

She seemingly opposed gentlemanly manners, but her criticism of Hallam, Carlyle and others had another purpose. She looked beyond external behaviour to chivalry's symbolic meaning and practical consequences. As far as she was concerned chivalry had kept and would keep women in an inferior position. She reflected Van Norman's teaching when she argued that women were the intellectual equals of men, quite a daring proposition for that time. From this perspective she posited that marriage should be a companionship, thus rejecting the common notion of man's lordship. Significantly, she did not call for a woman's autonomy, since that was incompatible with her biblical perspective.

Her astute observations and critique conflicted with the paternalism and patriarchy that governed so much of her environment. In the United States some women had similar ideas, most famously expressed in the Seneca Declaration of 1848, the same year the student read her essay. That declaration has received much attention, while the student's remarks have been largely ignored. In fact, feminist historians usually posit that the first wave of Canada's women's movement occurred in the 1870s, with some possible antecedents in the 1850s. But the BLA student's essay predate even that possibility.

And her essay was not the only one proclaiming women's equality. In fact, the BLA could be regarded as a hotbed of the new view. Certainly they were the seeds of the later movement, exemplified in Letitia Youmans, née Creighton, who in 1874 founded the first Canadian local of the Woman's Christian Temperance Movement, an organization that from its inception identified with women's causes. She had studied at the Academy and the *Hamilton Spectator* had praised her essays. Between 1847 and 1849 she taught English at the school.

What set the BLA students apart was their biblical approach to their subjects. It was in that light that the anonymous student came to realize that contemporary chivalric stories were not so much descriptions of the past, something about courteous manners, but prescriptive matter for the present, a metaphor for a specific order, a construct of manliness with its accompanying emphasis on hierarchy, patriarchy, and paternalism. Such a construct, she realized, placed woman on a pedestal and at the same time in an inferior position, hindering her progress as well as her God-given equal status. Although her name will probably remain unknown, the anonymous BLA student represented and defended Canadian women honorably and furthered their cause. This early Canadian Christian feminist, if I may style her so, shows that behind the façade of anonymity much can be – and in fact has been – accomplished.

Dale Spender, *Women of Ideas & what men have done to them* (London: Pandora, 1988): 4-5; italics in original. The Hamilton Public Library-Special Collections has BLA archival material, including a copy of the student's essay. See also my "'Alone in the Province': The Cobourg Ladies' Seminary-Burlington Ladies' Academy, 1842-1851," *Ontario History*, 89:1 (March 1997): 53-74, and "'Would That the Spirit of Chivalry Had Died with the Middle Ages': A Mid-Nineteenth-Century Female Student's Perspective," *Atlantis*, 29:3 (2005): 12-24.

Bert den Boggende, (bertdenb@yahoo.com) who has a PhD in British history, is a retired teacher who still does some substituting. He lives in Brooks, Alberta.

Business Directory

De Nederlandse COURANT

North America's oldest and most published Dutch language paper and exclusive aftermarket distributor of the Libelle and Margriet magazines in its 54th year of publication.

SPECIAL NEW SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

De Nederlandse COURANT: ❑ 1 year $15.00 (regular $30.00)
❑ 2 years $35.00 (regular $57.00)

❑ **Margriet** or ❑ **Libelle with De Nederlandse COURANT:**
❑ 1 year $100.00 (regular $150.00)
❑ 2 years $190.00 (regular $270.00)

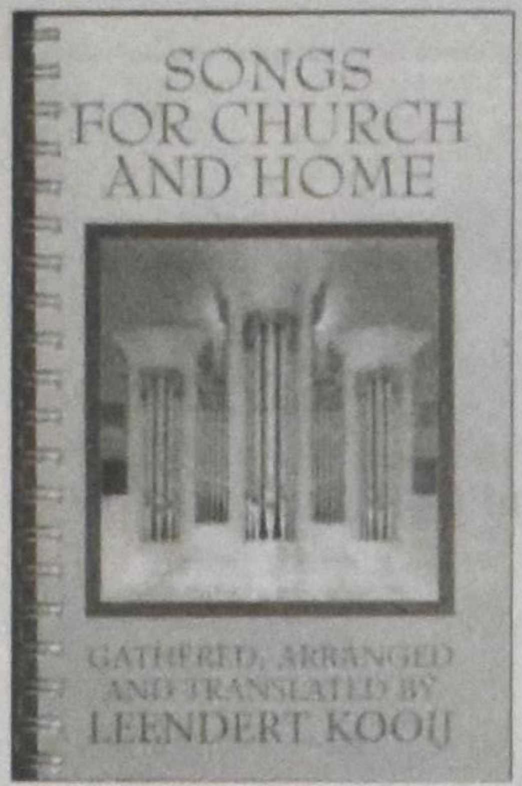
Name:______________________________

Address:______________________________

City/Code:______________________________

Phone:________________**E-Mail:**________________

Mail coupon with your cheque to:
De Nederlandse COURANT
2110 Hunt Crescent, Burlington ON L7M 2N9



Gathered, arranged and translateby Leendert Kooij
(263 pages)

A wonderful book which should soon be in every home. It took sometime to prepare, but here it is!
Complete with Dutch cross-reference index, to quickly find favourite songs.
Full of wonderful surprises. Choirs and also churches are all excited about it. Many songs you won't find anywhere else. Divided in sections, very clear music and print. Beautiful pictures. Something for everyone! A most wonderful gift for Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, etc.
It keeps alive our heritage! A beautiful gift for your children and grandchildren.
Great settings and translations. Meaningful texts and not difficult to play. Ready to be enjoyed by all!

PRICE! ONLY **$19.95** Plus $8.00 for postage	Special: Buy 5 get 1 free (postage and handling free)

Also available: WORDS ONLY BOOK...LARGER EASY TO READ PRINT $9.95 each

POWER POINT (WORDS) DISC coming.

Order from: LEENDERT KOOIJ RECORDS AND BOOKS
90 Topcliff Avenue, Downsview Ontario Canada M3N 1 L8
Telephone: 416-636-9779 email: landmkooy@rogers.com

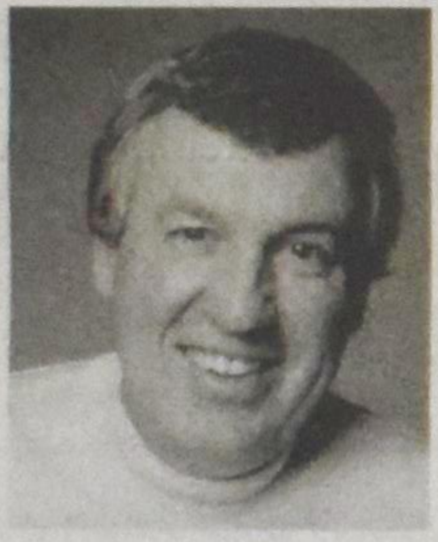
**Discount available on quantity orders.*

Put our experience to work for you.

THE KLOET SCHURINGA TEAM RE/MAX

Outstanding agents. Outstanding results.

Lifetime Achievement Award · RE/MAX Platinum Award · Hall of Fame · Hall of Fame



George Kloet
Sales Representative
gkloet@trebnet.com
www.georgekloet.com

Pauline Schuringa
Sales Representative
pschuringa@trebnet.com
www.paulineschuringa.com

RE/MAX Realty Enterprises Inc., Brokerage
1697 Lakeshore Road West
Mississauga, ON L5J 1J4
Tel.905.855.2200

A **charitable** gift **annuity** offers:

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

- the peace of mind of a guaranteed lifetime income, largely tax free
- the satisfaction of knowing that you will be providing a future gift for Redeemer University College

Blended rate of 6 - 10% (capital returned & interest) for those over 65.
Please contact us for your own confidential, no-obligation quote.
Information available on other gift-planning options as well.

Christian Stewardship Services

Redeemer University College 777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1J4
905-648-2139 ext. 4205 (Ben) stewardship@redeemer.on.ca

Re/Max Escarpment Realty Inc.

Mark Nyman
304 Wilson St. E, Unit #11
Ancaster, ON L9G 4S4
905-304-3303
Email: marknyman@remaxescarpment.com
Webssitte: www.marknyman.com

BCE selling for $42.75

BCE Consider a gift of all or part of your shares.
Full charitable receipt AND no capital gain tax.
Need help to get this to your favourite charities?
Contact **Link Charity Canada Inc**
1-800-387-8146 www.linkcharity.ca

BUSINESS AND SERVICE DIRECTORY

MERRITT FUNERAL HOME
287 Station St.
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
Serving Families for 4 Generations
Director: **Thomas C Merritt**
Fax 905-957-1371 Ph: **905-957-7031**
Website: www.merritt-fh.com FSAC

Winter Bookkeeping & Tax Service
4184 Mountain St.
PO. Box 844
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0
Ph: 905-563-4471
Fax: 905-563-4696
Email: wbts@bellnet.ca

MEESTER INSURANCE
Smithville, Ont.
Phone:
905-957-2333
or
1-800-465-8256
www.meesterinsurance.com
MEESTER INSURANCE BROKERS · AGRI-BUSINESS SPECIALIST

JERRY'S AUTO BODY
(Beamsville) Inc.
Serving Beamsville and area since 1969
•Complete Collision Repairs
•Quality Refinishing
Jerry Gerritsen 5529 Regional Rd. #81
Alan Gerritsen Beamsville ON L0R 1B3
Phone/Fax: **905-563-7702**

Digital Art & Graphics Inc.
DESIGN • PRINT • IMAGING
578 Upper James St.
Hamilton, ON L9C 2Y6
For all your printing needs
Call Brian or Kathie Bezemer at:
1-800-247-0155 or **905-574-0822**
Email: bezemer@digitalartandgraphics.com

BAKKER
BARRISTER & SOLICITOR
570 Welland Avenue
St. Catharines ON L2M 5V6
905-688-9352
Albert J Bakker

ARIE HOOGERBRUGGE
Associate Broker
RE/MAX
DelMarRealty Inc.
840 Queenston Rd.
Stoney Creek,
ON L8G 4A8
Ph: 905-662-5300 Fax: 905-664-2300

R. HAALBOOM, Q.C.
Barrister Solicitor Notary
Richard Rijk Haalboom, Q.C., B.A., J.D
7 Duke St. West **Ph: 519-579-2920**
Suite 304 **Fax: 519-576-0471**
Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6N7
E-mail: richard@haalboom.ca

Classifieds

Anniversaries

1958 October 2008

With thankfulness to God, we are pleased to announce the **50th Wedding Anniversary** of our parents

HARM AND TETTJE PRINS (nee **Talsma**)

Congratulations from your children:
Donald & Greta Prins
Louise & William Koopmans
Clarence Prins
Stuart & Henrietta Couperus
Fred & Liza Prins
Gerard & Nancy Prins
Margaret & Randy Kunkel
Grace and Darren Caudle
Arnold & Gina Prins
Henry & Daria Prins
and from your 33 grandchildren
& 1 great-grandchild.

There will be an **Open House** on Saturday, October 25 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Knox Christian School, Bowmanville.

Home address: 3909 Old Scugog Road, Bowmanville ON L1C 3K2

Vacation

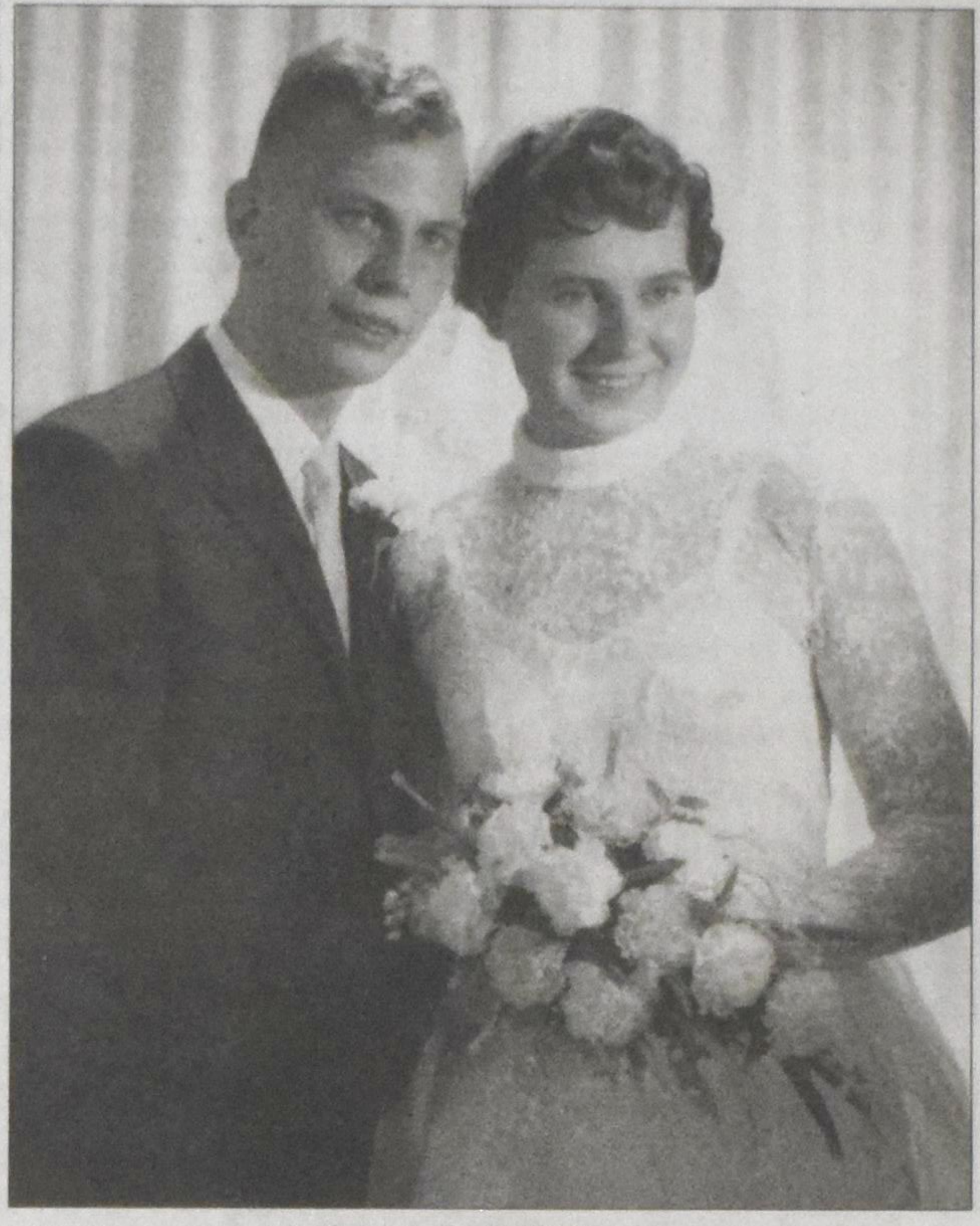
For rent: 2 bedroom, 2 bath **guest cottage** in **Tallahasee, Florida**. $650 per week furnished with linens, close to state park, hiking & biking trails, tennis. Call **850-386-6648**

Holiday in Holland

Beautiful self-contained cottage in **Friesland**
www.chestnutlane.nl.

Classifieds

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: *Christian Courier* is published on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Copy deadline for each issue is 9 a.m. Wednesday, 12 days prior to publication date.
RATE: (GST added to rates listed)
All personal and family announcements: $6.00 per square inch. **rose@christiancourier.ca**
Display advertising re. businesses and organizations: $8.00 per square inch. email: **ads@christiancourier.ca**
PHOTOS: There is a processing fee of $25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged per square inch but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. We need either an original photo (which we will return) or a downloadable internet image.
PERSONAL ADS: *Christian Courier* would be pleased to handle your personal ad in an efficient and discreet manner. The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is $25. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at $8 P.I. per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened.
NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS: We offer a $25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in *Christian Courier* and to parents who announce a child's birth in our paper. If you want to take advantage of this offer, please let us know when placing your ad.
SUBMITTING YOUR AD email: see above
Mail: Christian Courier
5 Joanna Dr
St. Catharines ON L2N 1V1
OTHER INFORMATION: *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format and editing style and is not responsible for any errors due to hand-written or phoned-in advertisements.



Great is thy Faithfulness

Thanking God for our parents

JACOB FREDERIK GEHRELS
and
HELENA ELIZABETH GEHRELS (nee **den Engelse**)

On the occasion of their **50th Wedding Anniversary**
October 17, 1958 - 2008

Wishing you many more happy years.
With love: from your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchild

Address: G03 - 282 Hurst Drive, Barrie ON L4N 0Z3

★ 38 YEARS OF SERVICE ★

CRC EXTENSION FUND

"...serving Christian Reformed churches and Christian schools since 1970"

Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian school building projects in Canada.

RATES TO Dec. 31, 2008
We pay **4.5%** on CRC deposits.
Earn approximently **4.6%** on RRSP/RRIF

Write: CRC Extension Fund
45 Harriet St,
Toronto ON M4L 2G1

Fax: 416-465-6367 **Call**: **416-461-1207**

"Leendert Kooij is Back"
...with a choir and Andre Knevel
See Calendar of Events for details

Unique Oak European Furniture
at the

Imported from
Belgium & Holland

Couches, Chairs
Tables, Wall Units
Decorative Items
'Dutch Bikes'

'Old World'
Craftsmanship
& Comfort

'pop in & enjoy a cup of coffee'

app'ts/info call: 905 563-0209 Herman & Janny Dunnink
51383 Hewitt Rd. Wainfleet hjdunnink@hotmail.com

Obituaries

ALICE (Alie) ABMA (nee **Osinga**)

born April 3, 1930
in Oudega W., Friesland, The Netherlands.

With sorrow yet assurance we give thanks to God for the life of a wife, mother and grandmother who passed away on September 10, 2008, in the cardiac unit of the University Hospital in London, Ontario.

She was surrounded by family as she passed. Predeceased by her beloved husband Fred (Freerk) (2005).

Dear mother to Andrew Abma of *Britannia Beach, BC;* John and Mary Abma of *Bright's Grove, ON;* Janet and John Postma of *Red Deer, AB;* Richard and Wendy Abma of *Calgary, AB;* Chris and Pete Van Hove of *Surrey, BC;* Mike and Shirlene Abma of *Grand Rapids, MI;* George and Amanda Abma of *Strathroy, ON;* Sylvia and Gary Lammers of *Kitchener, ON;* Francine and Dennis Vink of *Calgary, AB.* Grandmother (Beppe) to 27 grandchildren. Survived by brothers Michiel, Siemen, Yke, and Gooitsen Osinga and sister Sytske Schakel. Predeceased by brother Sietse Osinga.

O Lord, you have been our refuge through all generations. Psalm 90:1

HENDRIK (Henk) HOGEVEEN

Amsterdam, April 5, 1944 Ottawa, September 26, 2008

"Every Day Will Be Sunday, Bye and Bye" – (The Gospel Brothers LP)

Suddenly called home to be with the Lord on Friday, September 26, 2008, in his 65th year.

Beloved husband of Helen (nee Pranger).
Loving father of Jason, Janice (Jason Gadde), Lisa (Kevin Adams) and Brian (Jessica McConnell).
Proud Opa of Julia, Allison, Ethan, Matthew and Kate.
Predeceased by his parents Hendrikus & Jannetje Hogeveen.
Brother of Nan (the late Huibert Budding), Bert (Gerda), Cor (Jetty), Jane (John Vandesande), John (Lettie), Rita (Bert Hoolwerf), Henny (John Hoogeveen).

The funeral and memorial service took place Wednesday, October 1 at Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Ottawa.
Correspondence email corh@ncf.ca

Join Pastor Ralph and Anne Koops and Pastor Ron and Gerry Fisher on a

HOSTED OBERAMMERGAU TOUR.

Featuring Prague, Vienna, Budapest and the Oberammergau Passion Play.

Please join us for a **presentation about this tour** Wednesday **October 29** at 7:00 pm.

For details or to RSVP call **Vellinga's Travel 1-877-352-5150**.

Job Opportunity

Is God calling you to relational ministry among college students, helping shape their imaginations for a life of service in the Kingdom of God?
We are seeking a theologically

Reformed Campus minister

ordained or unordained, at Fanshawe College, a large, urban college campus with applied, vocational and technical programs in London, Ont. This is a half-time position with competitive compensation.
For more information please check our website:
http://publish.uwo.ca/~mwagenma .
For a detailed job description or to submit a resume, contact
James Doelman, Chair,
London Campus Ministries Committee,
625 Middlewoods Dr.,
London, Ont., Canada. N6G 1W7.
jdoelman@uwo.ca.
Closing date: Dec. 1, 2008 or when position filled.

** See our website at www.christiancourier.ca for job ads recently run in CC.*

Job Opportunities

Hope CRC of Brantford, Ontario is seeking a

full-time ordained "Associate Pastor with Focus on the Youth".

We are a healthy growing congregation of some 140 families that seeks to nurture our youth for Kingdom service.

Position responsibilities include teaching, visiting, participation in worship and some preaching.

Job description and church profile are available by contacting Elaine van Wyngaarden (search Committee chair) at 519-756-8524 (email: dealk@rogers.com) or Pastor Ken Benjamins at 519-759-7581 (email: pastorken@silomail.com).

AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE IN PART-TIME MINISTRY!

The Burlington CRC is now receiving applications for an exacting opportunity to provide leadership to our small groups and outreach ministries.

A job description for this role as *Ministries Coordinator* is available upon request from Tina at office@burlingtoncrc.ca .
Resumes can be forwarded by **Nov 1st** to the same address.

Director of Development

The Institute for Christian Studies,
a graduate school of philosophy in Toronto,
is preparing a new generation of scholars to serve as professors in both public and Christian universities. We are seeking an experienced and enthusiastic fundraiser to support and move forward our development program.

For further information, visit www.icscanada.edu/ics/jobs/
Application deadline is November 3rd, 2008

Immanuel Christian Elementary School
Lethbridge, Alberta
invites applications for a

full time grade three maternity leave position

beginnning on November 24, 2008.
Please send resumes to:
Henry Ronda, Principal
Immanuel Christian Elementary School
2010 - 5th Avenue North
Lethbridge, Alberta T1H 0N5
Phone: 403-317-7860
Email: henry.ronda@gmail.com

REDEEMER CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL
(The Community for Christian Learning) in Ottawa
is actively seeking applications for a

full-time Principal

The successful candidate will be responsible for the school's educational program and general operations.
The position will commence August 1, 2009.

RCHS has been blessed with growth, and now serves about 175 Grade 9 - 12 students from a broad interdenominational community. In the setting of the nation's capital, ***the mission of Redeemer is to provide a community of learning that challenges students to develop disciplined minds, hearts, and bodies according to the full measure of Jesus Christ.*** We are seeking applications from candidates with a sincere and active faith in Jesus Christ, and a passion for working in a community with the above mission.

The successful candidate will use her/his Christian leadership skills to mentor staff, students and volunteers; allow her/his vision to challenge the school community to grow spiritually and academically; have appropriate training and experience; and be committed to a reformed Christian worldview. Preference will be given to candidates who hold or are progressing towards a Christian School Principal Certificate.

An information package is available upon request. Information about RCHS is presented at www.rchs.on.ca. Interested applicants may send their résumé, statement of faith, and philosophy of Christian education to **mmudde@primus.ca**.

Application deadline is 31 October 2008.

Emmanuel Home

13425 – 57 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5A 2G1
Telephone (780) 478-2051 Fax (780) 473-0970
email: news@emmanuelhome.ab.ca
website: www.emmanuelhome.ab.ca

Position Available:

Executive Director for Emmanuel Home

The Executive Director serves in an advisory capacity to the Board in determining decisions of policy and becomes the chief agent for carrying out these decisions and provides executive control of all the Christian Senior Citizens Homes Society of Northern Alberta, (Emmanuel Home) operations and activities.
Emmanuel Home is recruiting an Executive Director with the following qualifications &/or credentials to begin as soon as possible and will bring the following to this position:

1. A degree in health-care or business administration, humanities, education or a combination of education and experience in one of the relevant disciplines. Candidates with experience in the Service industry will be considered.
2. Commitment to the Mission and Vision of the Christian Senior Citizens Homes Society of Northern Alberta operating as Emmanuel Home. Must be a Christian and a member of the Society.
3. Interpersonal skills of sensitivity and compassion, as well as persuasive oral and written communication skills.

In addition the successful candidate shall have the following skills or a combination of knowledge or experience with:

1. Computers including Word, Excel, email, internet programs.
2. Financial management including contracts, budgets, staffing and Alberta Labour standards.
3. Construction industry as Emmanuel Home is preparing to expand with 54 new units.
4. Managing staffing and multiple programs.
5. Supportive Living Residents and/or knowledge of Alberta's Supportive Living Accommodation Standards.

Please reply with resume & references in writing to Gwyneth Pelster, Administrator Emmanuel Home, email gpelster@emmanuelhome.ab.ca or call 780-478-2051 for further information. Job description provided on request.

Climate Change is Real — *We need to do our part*

Join Us!

Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives Presents

KAIROS

CSI

Carbon Sabbath Initiative

A group process directed to help you understand and deal with how to:

- Calculate Your Carbon Footprint
- Commit to Personal Change
- Reflect on the Links Between Climate and Justice
- Advocate for Just and Sustainable Energy

Learn How to Form a Group in Your Community!

Come to a One-Day Training Workshop in Your Area!

Sorrento, BC — Sorrento Retreat Centre — November 1st

Saskatoon, SK — Queen's House Renewal Centre — November 15th

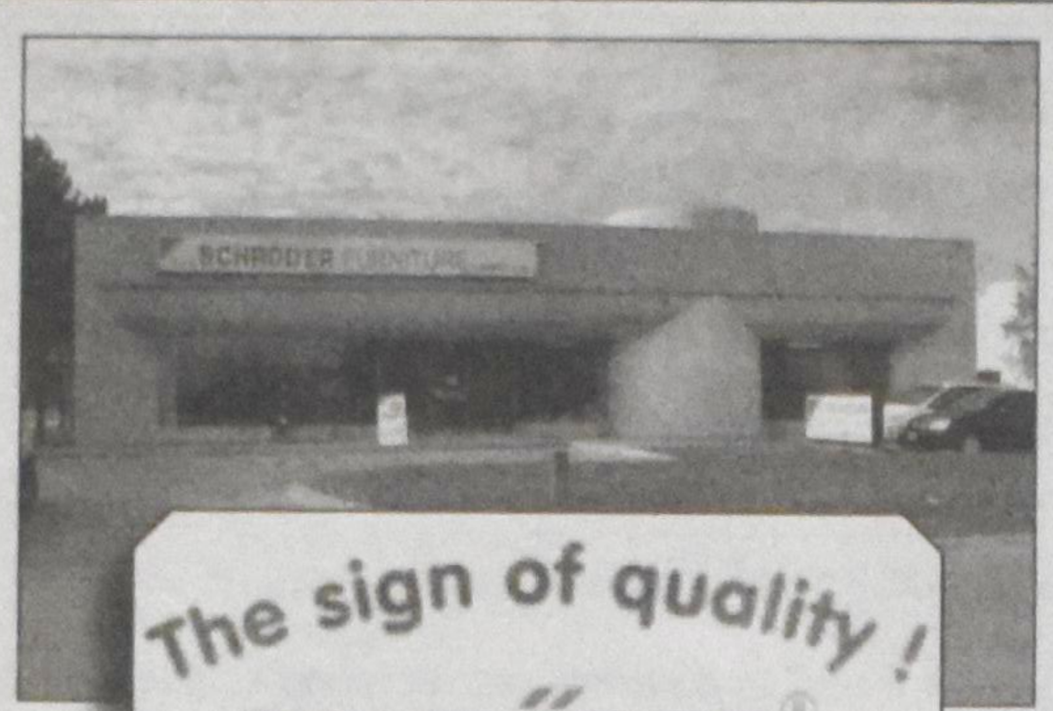
Arnprior, ON — Galilee Retreat Centre — November 29th

Fredericton, NB — Wilmott United Church — October 25th

To register go to:
www.kairoscanada.org

Cost: Suggested donation of $10.00 to offset the cost of lunch

Classifieds



The sign of quality!

SCHRÖDER FURNITURE Canada Ltd.

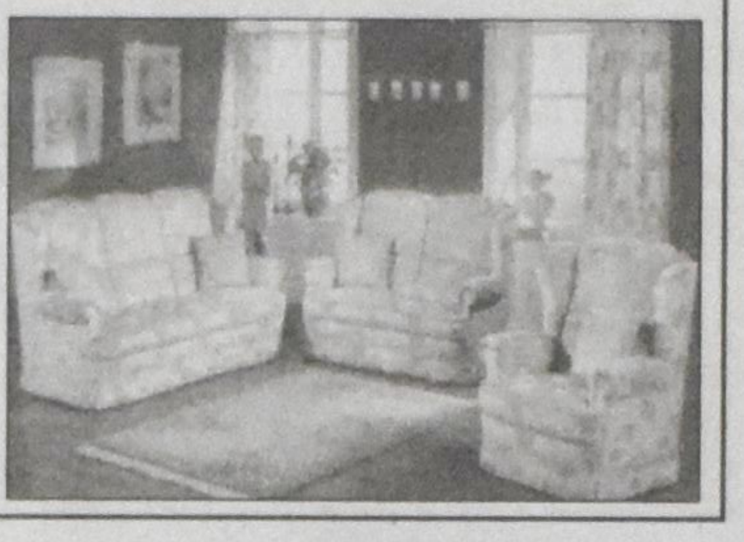
Do you have problems getting out of your existing furniture?

Is your sofa wearing soft?

Our Coil Spring Constuction gives you a lifetime of

painfree comfort

At Schroder furniture you can find exceptional **Quality** and **long lasting** Seating Comfort.



Come and visit us at
2140 Dunwin Dr.
Mississauga, Ontario
905-828-9511
www.schroderfurniture.com

Wallaceburg Bookbinding
& MFG. CO. LTD.

We Bind, Rebind and Restore
Save money– Don't buy replacements!

Churches: Send us one of your hymnals as a sample and we will rebind it at no cost. *Normal price for quantities of five or more-$7.50*

Personal Orders: We will bind short run editions e.g. family histories as well as rebinding and restoring personal books.

1-800-214-2463 FAX (519)627-6922
95 Arnold St. Wallaceburg ON N8A 3P3 http://wbmbindery.com

Tyler vanMiddelkoop
CFP, CLU

Beat the Bank.

Call me today for a no obligation assessment on your Mortgage Insurance.

P.V.&V. Financial Centre
905 632 0240
1 866 694 7276
www.pvv-insurance.com

MARANATHA HOMES
living **independently** in Christian **community**

Maranatha Homes, located in south Burlington near many amenities, is a place where Christian seniors can enjoy independent living in community with others. The Home's newly renovated units and award winning architectural design, combined with its reasonable rent rates make Maranatha an attractive and affordableaccommodation for seniors.

For further information contact:
Rosanne van der Woerd,
109-3260 New St.
Burlington, On. L7N 3L4

Ph: **905-681-0311** Email: rvanderwoerd@sympatico.ca

Elim Investment Opportunities

Promissory Notes

Bonds – Sold Out

This is not to be construed as an offer to solicit investments and no investment can be made until the Investor has received an Information Statement issued by Elim Housing Society.

Established by the Elim Housing Society in 1995, Elim Village is located on 20 acres in the heart of Surrey's Fleetwood area. Based and operated on Christian principles, Elim's vision is to provide various levels of quality care for seniors.

Today, over 400 people call Elim home and are able to enjoy the benefits of living within a caring Christian retirement community. As part of Elim's ongoing successful financial strategy, we offer a variety of investment opportunities. Our rates are determined by the Royal Bank of Canada's prime rate.

We currently offer **Royal Bank of Canada's prime plus 1%** (not to exceed 7%)

On October 6, 2008 Elim Investments were accruing interest at **5.75%**

ELIM Village

For more information regarding investment with Elim Village, contact **Terry-Lynn Dryfhout** at **tld@elimvillage.com** or call **778.996.7755**
Visit our website at **www.ElimVillage.com**

A Christian Retirement Community

UNIGLOBE DCA TRAVEL & CRUISE

Dear Friends,
Effective October 1, 2008, DCA Travel & Cruise has been taken over by Tomas Tan under the new name of UNIGLOBE DCA Travel & Cruise. Tomas is originally from Indonesia and immigrated to Canada through The Netherlands.
All our long serving staff that have been with us for so many years is remaining with the agency and will offer all the travel products as before with many more new products and services with the same excellent award winning services.
Thank you for your support and encouragement over the last 25 years and we encourage you to continue to use the many new benefits that UNIGLOBE DCA Travel & Cruise will offer.

Sincerely,
Marten & Anne Mol

For issue dates and deadlines, contact information and more, visit our website at www.christiancourier.ca

---

ADA REALTY LTD

2011-137 Ave. Suite 404
Edmonton AB T5A 4W2

780-473-8149
Sid Vandermeulen

Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton & district.
Home of confidence

REDEEMER
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Put your investment to work for a wonderful Kingdom cause!

Competitive Rates - 4.00% to 4.30%*
5 Year Term
Interest paid semi-annually

Current rates subject to change

For Information Call: 1-877-779-0913 ext. 4205

*Other rates apply for RRSP/RIF plans

777 Garner Road East Tel: 905-648-2131
Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4 Fax: 905-648-2134
www.redeemer.ca stewardship@redeemer.ca

Low interest rates getting you down?
If you're over 65, have you considered a **charitable gift annuity**?

- Wonderful income - as high as 10%
- Largely tax exempt
- An charitable receipt for at least 20% of the annuity amount.
- This lasts as long as you live
- Worry free
- Benefits the charities of your choice

Never heard of a gift annuity? Call for a no-obligation quotation or have a child or grandchildren call on your behalf.

LinkCharity Canada Inc.
45 Harriet St. Toronto
Ontario M4L 2G1
Ph: 1-800-387-8146
Fax: 416-465-6367
www.linkcharity.ca Email: info@linkcharity.ca

Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2008

Oct 18 Day of Encouragement. An opportunity for all deacons, elders and church members to be encouraged, inspired and equipped for ministry. This event takes place at Hamilton District Christian High in **Ancaster**. Our theme is 'Walking in His Way'. 50 workshops await your registration. The cost is $55.00. Registration flyers and details are available at www.diaconalministries.com or call (905) 336-2920 for more information.

Oct. 22 Benefit Concert at 7:30 p.m. for Eurovangelism, with Rev. Brian Lise. Choir – Organ –Trumpet – Vocal Quartet & Audience. Admission Free. Collection Eurovangelism. Hebron CRC, 42040 Anderson Str. **Whitby**

Oct 25 Benefit Concert 7:30 p.m. for Eurovangelism, with Rev. Brian Lise. Choir – Organ –Trumpet – Vocal Quartet & Audience. Admission Free. Collection Eurovangelism St.George's Anglican Church. 99 Woolwich Street. **Guelph**

Nov 6 Organ recital featuring Stephanie Burgoyne (ARCCO) and William Vandertuin (solo and organ four hands) at Trinity Anglican Church, **Cambridge**, 12:15 p.m. (wvan08@rogers.com)

Nov 8 The Lighthouse Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction, 377 Woodbridge Ave.,**Woodbridge,** ON. Doors open at 5:30 Dinner 6:15 RSVP Janet 416-535-6262 or janet@lighthousecentre.ca

Nov 8 Trillium Leaque Reunion (Ontario) If you were involved in Trillium League Youth during the years of 1975 and 1982, you are invited to reminisce & reconnect from 4-9 p.m. at Community CRC in **Kitchener**. For details go to www.trilliumleaguereunion.com or email Phia (Hoogendoorn) Howes at phia@sympatico.ca or call 519-699-5942.

Nov 14-16 Reformed Marriage Encounter weekend in **Peterborough**. For more information or to register on-line, go to www.reformedme.org or contact Chris & Cindy Otten at 519-393-5163 or by email at Ontario_registration@reformedme.org.

Nov 19 Festive Concert, OCMA Come back. Choir – Organ – Panflute – Trumpet – Vocal Quartet & Audience. 7:30 p.m. Admission Adults: $20.00 under 12: $10.00 Georgetown CRC, 11611 Trafalger Rd., **Georgetown** ON. Phone OCMA at 416-636-9779

Nov 22 Festive Concert, OCMA Come back. Choir 7:30 p.m. – Organ – Panflute –Trumpet – Vocal Quartet & Audience. Admission Adults: $20.00 under 12: $10.00. Springdale CRC, 1466 5th Sideroad, **Bradford** ON Phone OCMA at 416-636-9779

Nov 23 Dutch Service will be held in the **Ancaster** Christian Reformed Church at 3:00 p.m. Rev. Harry VanderWindt will be preaching.

2009

Feb 13-15 Reformed Marriage Encounter weekend in **Niagara Falls**. For more information or to register on-line, go to www.reformedme.org or contact Chris & Cindy Otten at 519-393-5163 or by email at Ontario_registration@reformedme.org.

Dordt College Alumni & Friends 2009 Spring Tour

Join professors Leendert van Beek and Dr. Hubert Krygsman on this incredible learning vacation to the Netherlands! During this ten-day tour you'll experience the culture, history, cuisine, and traditions of the Netherlands.

As a special addition while in Dordrecht, attend a performance by the Dordt College Concert Choir under the direction of Dr. Benjamin Kornelis. From art in Amsterdam, to - owers at Keukenhof, to Jewish history during WWII, to a stroll on the Scheveningen promenade, this tour o ers the perfect balance of fun and learning.

Tour arranged by WITTE TRAVEL & TOURS

For more information contact Dianne De Wit at 712-722-6029 or ddewit@dordt.edu

May 11-20, 2009

Netherlands

The Lighthouse Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction

Please Join Us

Saturday♦November♦8♦ 2008
377 Woodbridge Avenue in Woodbridge

Doors Open at 5:30 Dinner 6:15

RSVP Janet 416-535-6262
or janet@lighthousecentre.ca

Reservations required by October 31, 2008

Your reservation is your ticket
We request donations that evening to cover dinner costs and your financial gift.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES – restore communication – rekindle romance – renew commitment. Join millions of couples worldwide who have learned how to keep their marriage vibrant and alive. Effective communication leads to enhanced romance.

The next Reformed **Marriage Encounter weekends** are **November 14-16, 2008** in **Peterborough**, **February 13-15, 2009** in **Niagara Falls**, **April 24-26, 2009** in **London**. Completely private weekend – **NO** group discussion. For more information or to register on-line, go to www.reformedme.org or contact Chris & Cindy Otten at 519-393-5163 or by email at Ontario_registration@reformedme.org.

You are invited to:

SENIORS' DAY

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE Monday, October 27

Registration starts at 9:30am with activities planned from 10:00am to 3:00pm

MORNING SESSION:
"A Christian view of place for today"
by Dr Craig Bartholomew,
H. Evan Runner Professor of Philosophy and Professor of Religion and Theology at Redeemer University College

"Place is like the air we breath - we take it for granted until something alerts us to just how important it is. If you have moved countries or moved from one part of Canada to a very different part, say from Hamilton to Vancouver, you will know how place affects us all. My talk will explore place as God's gift to us and how we can honour him in our development of it, whether it be in our garden, a room in home, developing a college or building a mall"

AFTERNOON SESSION:
Musical Program

Guests will have an opportunity to meet with their grandchildren during the afternoon's coffee break.

Registration: $20.00 per person, includes a roast beef buffet luncheon. For more information and to register, please call Magda Beukes at 905.648.2139 ext. 4208 or via email: mbeukes@redeemer.ca no later than October 17.

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1J4 | T. 905.648.2131 | www.redeemer.ca

UNIGLOBE DCA Travel & Cruise

Visit us at: www.uniglobedcatravel.com info@uniglobedcatravel.com
TORONTO: 416-224-5211
1-800-667-2525
Canada wide - ticket home delivery!

TRAVEL INSURANCE - HEALTH/CANCELLATION/COMPREHENSIVE

AMSTERDAM 2009 MARTINAIR SPRING / SUMMER 2009 17 APRIL to 10 OCTOBER Mon./Fri./Sat. NOW AVAILABLE FOR BOOKING CALL FOR DETAILS

WE ALSO BOOK OAD and KRAS **BUS TOURS** *Call for details*

SUN, SEA, SAND-HOT DEALS!
OCTOBER DEPARTURES:
- **Manzanillo de Cuba** air/hotel package from CA$225 taxes CA$259
- **Manzanillo de Cuba** air only from CAD$125 taxes CA$259
- **Camaguey** air/hotel package from CA$265 taxes CA$259
- **Camaguey** air only from CA$175 taxes CA$259

Call for details

This is your Travel Centre for all your Travel Needs!!! On. Reg. 01495998

News

As violence drops, Iraqi tribes begin to make amends

Tribal elders are reviving a traditional process to heal the deep animosities resulting from sectarian bloodshed between Shiites and Sunnis.

Scott Peterson

Baghdad *(Christian Science Monitor)* –Tears rarely roll down Iraqi farmer Hassan Mohammed Hamoud's proud, sun-creased face.

But as this Shiite father describes his losses to war, the impact overwhelms him: a brother, two sons, two nephews, all killed by Sunni militant neighbors during the peak of sectarian violence in 2006.

Instead of seeking revenge, though, Mr. Hamoud is trying to forgive. He wants to end this feud and restore peace using a traditional process that is revitalizing the role of tribes in halting the cycle of violence.

"If reconciliation goes well and [the Sunni families] swear on the Koran, I think fighting will end after that," he says.

The effort is one example of how Sunni and Shiite tribes are meeting to accept responsibility for atrocities committed against each other during the war – in face-to-face talks between tribal elders – that involve mediators and often the paying of blood money by the guilty party.

In this case, which only relates to the killing of one of Hamoud's nephews, the Sunni tribe may pay Hamoud's tribe at least $40,000, though the initial request will be 10 times that amount.

"All the leaders of the big tribes are working for reconciliation between Shiites and Sunnis – we need to solve this problem for our people," says Sheikh Fayeq Hassan al-Taiee, a Shiite peacemaker who wears three rings of the type favored by Shiites, one with a polished white stone the size of a stuffed olive.

"They don't want to return back to killing," says Sheikh Taiee, who is representing Hamoud's family in the blood feud negotiation. "Revenge means killing again, so we decided to seek peaceful ways."

The tribal talks are the result of a nationwide call from Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and senior religious leaders earlier this year to bridge differences between tribes to prevent future bloodshed.

This push has been enabled by improved security and a dramatic fall in violent attacks over the past year due to several factors: the US military surge, the decision by Sunni militants to join the US in fighting Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), and a stand down of the Mahdi Army, the main anti-American Shiite militia.

PHOTO: SCOTT PETERSON/GETTY

The Negotiator: Sheikh Fayek Hassan al-Taiee, left, an Iraqi Shiite and elder in the Al Sahwa tribe, leads reconciliation talks.

"When we start this tribal reconciliation, it should be the seed of reconciliation for all of Iraq," says Taiee, who began his efforts five months ago. "The Shiite and the Sunni people, each one stole the rights of the others, and now must solve that in a peaceful way. They should return to their senses; they found that killing is not a good way."

The example of the Taiee tribe, to which Hamoud and his family belong, illustrates the challenges facing all would-be peacemakers in Iraq. They are tentatively coming to terms with the vicious nature of the killing, at the hands, in the case of Hamoud, of people they have lived among for the 37 years.

Hamoud ran his 500-hectare farm with the help of his six sons and four daughters. But in early 2005 they received a letter from AQI – Hamoud still carries the leaflet, worn through at the folds – that warned "Shiite infidels living in Tarmiyeh" to flee or risk death.

Their troubles deepened in the spring of 2006. Hamoud's brother was killed in his home. One son was kidnapped and killed after taking his pregnant sister to the hospital. Another son was killed while shopping; the death certificate describes "several shots to the head."

Two nephews were kidnapped, one was killed, another released after the family paid a $50,000 ransom. Hamoud still keeps images on his phone of the results of constant beating of the man with cables.

Also on his phone is the confession video of the man who killed yet another nephew. The insurgent confessed to killing Hamoud's nephew during a spate of six attacks he carried out as part of the Islamic Army, an AQI-affiliated group.

The insurgent remains in custody, and at first in reconciliation talks, his family denied their son was responsible. Now they have agreed to pay, though will haggle over the price before a final meeting is held in a few days in which 150 to 200 people will gather to close the deal.

"The insurgents' fathers have woken and want to fix what their sons have been doing," says Hamoud. "We want the relationship [between Shiite and Sunni tribes] to come back like before."

The peacemaker hopes such a price will make potential killers think twice, before starting any new blood feuds.

"We need to work in a way that we do not lose the little people," says Taiee. "This has been an exceptional period. So many people lost so many things."

Israeli organization helps children victimized by terrorism

SHILOH, Israel – David Rubin, founder of Shiloh Israel Children's Fund (SICF), will arrive in the U.S. on Nov. 10 for a two-week media tour beginning in Pittsburgh, Pa. He will make additional appearances through the southeastern U.S. during his tour, which will also highlight *God, Israel, & Shiloh* – Rubin's book that relates the biblical and historical saga of Israel as well as the story of the heroic families living in and rebuilding the biblical heartland of Israel despite the obstacles in their path. A portion of the book's proceeds will benefit the work of SICF.

"Since the launch of Shiloh Israel Children's Fund, we've been able to help families rebuild their lives after suffering massive traumas and injuries," said Rubin. "Terrorism continues to plague Shiloh, so there's still much work to be done. We've had a tremendous amount of support, and we're prayerful that we will be able to continue serving the needs of our community's children through treatment, innovative programming, and financial aid."

Rubin founded SICF after he and his 3-year old son Ruby survived a vicious terrorist shooting attack in 2001. Rubin began receiving dozens of requests to share his compelling story, and, in response to the outpouring of support, he launched the organization to help ease the pain and fear experienced by young victims like his son.

Rubin moved to the village of Shiloh where he served the re-established town of Shiloh as its mayor. During his term, he began to develop productive relationships with Christian Zionists, based on mutual respect and the shared belief that all believers in the God of Israel need to work together to achieve his purposes in this world.

The mission of Shiloh Israel Children's Fund (www.ShilohIsraelChildren.org) is to ease the trauma of terrorism in children and rebuild the biblical heartland of Israel. The organization was established by former Shiloh mayor David Rubin and friends of Israel in the U.S. to support therapeutic, educational, and recreational projects for children in Israel – particularly in the Shiloh bloc of communities where the children have suffered from the terrorism of the past few years.